

Preparing for school

Parent guides



**CHANGING
FACES**

Making the transition from one learning environment to another - home to nursery, infant to junior or junior to secondary school - is a significant event for any child and the family. When your child has a condition that affects their appearance you will also have the additional challenge of managing any curiosity, concern and surprise from school staff, classmates and other parents. It is useful to start preparing the ground early to give your child a successful start at their new school.

It is usual for parents to have anxiety about how their child will get on at school, especially when your child looks different. This guide will help you to address these concerns. We also want to ensure children with conditions, injuries, or marks that affect their appearance do well throughout their schooling, so that they can go on to have a good job, career etc. This means both the social and educational aspects of their schooling. It is really important that teachers, nursery workers and classroom assistants have high expectations for your child's long term achievements, as well as being able to manage any social difficulties as and when they arise. School attendance for example strongly relates to eventual achievement throughout school.

Clear information and guidance from you will help teachers and other parents to be aware of the importance of responding consistently to situations and will help them to feel more confident in doing this appropriately.

This guide aims to:

- Help you prepare your child for transition to the next learning environment**
- Support you in working with teachers and other parents in talking about and responding to your child's condition**
- Help you and your child to manage staring and answer questions from children and parents.**

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Preparing for nursery or school

What your child's nursery or school can do to help

It is vital for all staff members, including teaching assistants, playground monitors, lunchtime supervisors, administrative and catering staff, to understand your child's condition and to be aware of the particular social and psychological challenges that having an unusual appearance can present. It is often the more open environments such as the playground where challenges may occur. They also need to know what to say or do when somebody stares, makes a comment or asks a question about your child's appearance.

It is essential that staff members know how to handle curiosity from other children, other parents and new staff members to support your child in taking part in social and school activities without their difference becoming the main focus of attention.

Setting up a meeting with your child's new school

Contact the person who will be responsible for looking after your child (this may be the manager of the nursery, the nursery nurse, keyworker, teacher, Inclusion officer, SENCO or the head teacher) and request a meeting well before your child starts school. You need to allow the school enough time to make the necessary preparations and to anticipate any training needs.

It is worthwhile pressing forward with your child's school. Here is one father's experience:

"School staff really welcome this training as part of their own skill set/professional development. We may assume that they know a lot more than they actually do...don't be tentative in approaching and driving this training. If you are faced with a reluctant head, persist – the majority of staff members will embrace it."

"With Changing Faces we have been able to empower all school staff to guide Daisy through her hair loss..."

It can help to share the following information:

- The name of your child's condition and how it affects them
- Your child's likes, strengths and resources, as well as examples of their achievements
- Any medical or functional needs that your child has
- Any additional or learning needs that your child has
- Examples of how you explain your child's difference if people are curious or make a comment (e.g. "*Marcy's skin is red and itchy. It's called eczema. You can't catch it*")

It can help to ask the following questions:

- How do the teachers plan to deal with any curiosity about your child's appearance?
- How will they deal with teasing and bullying?
- Do they have experience of supporting a child who has a disfigurement? How has this child settled in?
- How do they encourage friendliness and inclusion?
- Can the school arrange for a special educational needs assessment if required?
- How will the school keep you informed about your child's progress?
- Would the school consider some specialist in-service training to support their staff work with a child who has a disfigurement?

It is also important to make sure teachers have examples of high achievers with your child's condition and that your child's educational abilities are not overshadowed by their medical needs.

You can also let your child's school or nursery know about Changing Faces' work in schools. We provide training, information and advice for teachers in early years settings through to 16+ education. See our [Educational guides](#) for further information. Before the term begins - five key tips:

1. Contact your child's teacher or the head teacher and request a meeting to share information about your child, their development, strengths and needs, both educationally and socially. See [Setting up a meeting with your child's school](#) for more detail.
2. Put together an information sheet for staff. Take a look at the [Resources](#) section in this guide.
3. Ask your child's teacher to run an information session for *all* the staff in collaboration with you so that they are skilled in using the **Explain – Reassure – Distract – Assert – Humour** techniques (see below). Using these, the school staff can model how to respond to curiosity from other children, other parents and new staff members in a natural and straightforward way.
4. Organise regular meetings with your child's teachers to find out how they are managing socially.
5. Let your child's school know about Changing Faces.
6. Explain to your child the steps that have been put in place and what to do if they require assistance.

Changing Faces has identified five simple techniques to manage a range of situations:

EXPLAIN – REASSURE – DISTRACT – ASSERT – HUMOUR

They may sound too simple – and clearly some situations can be a lot more complicated. But, remembering the five techniques can be a quick and easy prompt when your child is in a challenging situation – reminding them of some ways to cope. Of course, each person will be different. Depending on the situation and your experiences, you can try them out and decide what works best for you and when to use it. There is a lot more information about the techniques and managing the challenges in **Children and families** and **Communicating with Confidence, You and your child** and our **Children & Young People’s guides**.

Teaching school staff the Explain – Reassure – Distract – Assert - Humour techniques

It is helpful to prepare a list of things that you and your child say so that everyone is using the same simple form of words both in and out of school, for example:

“That’s just the way her face is. You could go and ask her what her name is?”

“Danny has a scar. He was hurt in an accident but he is okay now. Can you help me collect the books?”

“Jess has a pink mark on her face. We call it a birthmark. It’s like a mole only bigger. I have a mole on my elbow. Have you got any moles too?”

“Ahmed was in a fire but he’s okay now. Let’s wipe the tables shall we?”

If this seems a lot for you to take on, speak to a Changing Faces Practitioner who can support you in talking with the school.

Making friends and fitting in at school

Getting to know one another and making friends begins with looking and being looked at. Looking is natural when someone new arrives and we look more and for longer when someone's appearance is different. The other children at your child's nursery or school are likely to look carefully, perhaps with surprise and interest at your child. Some younger children may reach out to touch your child's distinctive mark or feature. Others may ask a question or they might look away because they are not sure how to respond. If these expressions of interest and visual contact are discouraged, your child is at risk of finding it harder in the long run to join in and make friends. Help your child to understand that if a small child is staring or asking a question they are not being rude.

Having something to say

Providing your child with something to say when people are curious about their looks, and teaching them how to move the conversation on will get any curiosity out of the way and enable your child to get on with the business of making friends. Your child will hear the simple explanations you are using to describe their condition.

For small children, you or school staff can adapt this so your child will learn how it's done and can try it out for themselves when they feel ready.

By explaining things in their own way your child will gradually increase their self-confidence amongst peers and the sense that having a visible difference is okay. Preparation using the **Explain – Reassure – Distract – Assert – Humour** techniques can make this step easier for you and your child.

"I am Matthew. I have one small ear but I can hear you really well. What is your name?"

"It's just a red mark. It doesn't hurt me. Do you want to go on the swings?"

"I have eczema. It makes my skin red and itchy, but you can't catch it. Shall we draw a picture together?"

Providing your child with something to say when other children are curious about the way they look will stand them in good stead for starting or returning to nursery or school.

For more helpful tips on supporting your child with this take a look at [Communicating with confidence](#) and our Children and young people's guides.

Helping your child to join in

Younger children often need encouragement to play together. They may have some of the skills (e.g. sharing, turn taking) but they will not remember to do so all the time. It is helpful to suggest how your child can join in rather than insisting that they play with others. Maximising your child's opportunities for positive social interactions can influence their feelings of self-worth, ability to forge friendships and do well at school.

Your child will be watching what you say and do at the park. If you can show the following social skills for meeting people, joining in and making friends, your child will feel more confident about trying them out.

- Introducing yourself by name and child's name too
- Introducing your child to others
- Smiling more and making eye contact
- Asking to join in a game that others are already playing
- Asking someone else if they would like to join in with what you are doing
- Suggesting a game or activity
- Starting a conversation, or changing the subject with a question

These skills will also be helpful for siblings who may find social situations tricky as a result of reactions to their brother or sister's appearance.

You or your child's teacher could introduce one or two of the social skills listed above and encourage observation of other children doing these things. When ready, the teacher could decide with the child which of the skills to try first and set a target for the week ahead, giving a safe environment to try the skills out in. Once confident about using a couple of the skills, these can be built on and more skills introduced, with practice using them in a variety of situations.

Many schools have established systems for supporting children. These can be very helpful when a child is actively left out by others or has not yet acquired the social skills to join a game.

You could ask your child's teacher about the following:

- A playground buddy system so that your child always has other children available for company at break times.
- Establishing a circle of friends that will provide several weeks of targeted and monitored support. This will enable your child to develop social skills with the support and security of the peer group through shared activities.
- Organised games with a lunchtime supervisor or member of staff that give your child the opportunity to join in with other children.

Additional needs

Sometimes other factors can influence a child's self-esteem and social interactions. Your child may have a specific learning difficulty, delayed development or a hearing or speech impairment that affects their interactions with others.

You may find that you can adjust some of the ideas in this guide for your child's particular needs. For example, a child with a hearing impairment may not speak clearly or may sign. Instead of verbally giving an explanation it might be helpful to have a card with a written explanation on. Some children also like to have the option of using a communication card to help initiate a friendly chat. Having a specific gesture like a card to convey the wish to speak and the need for careful listening can be very useful socially. They can carry a card which might say something like, "*I can talk but it's hard to understand me. Are you up for a chat?*" If the other young person nods their agreement, then it will be worthwhile them making the effort of communicating through speech. See our [Education guides](#) for more information about speech and language difficulties and self-expression.

Some children may have specific learning difficulties (e.g. ADHD or autism), which compromise ability to fit in or use age appropriate social skills. This means not only do they look different but their behaviour and understanding of social situations may also lead to difficulties with others.

It is important to seek further advice and professional support from your GP, consultant, health visitor or your child's teacher, if you are concerned that your child has learning difficulties or may need specific support. Take a look at the Changing Faces website for further organisations offering support and information.

From time to time your child may encounter difficulties which you will need to share and address with their teacher and occasionally with a senior member of staff or head.

General issues to do with social integration and friendships are best discussed with your child's class teacher. If there is an issue regarding inclusion and any special educational needs, ask to speak with the class teacher as well as the head of inclusion or special educational needs coordinator (SENCO). Try to bear in mind that many teachers will have meetings, clubs and other jobs that they need to do straight after school and may need to know in advance that you wish to speak with them.

Teasing, name-calling and bullying

Most children become more sensitive about appearance as they grow older and more judgmental about the appearance of others. Teasing, name-calling and bullying can involve calling someone a name (e.g. titch, pizza face, alien), making fun of someone, picking on someone, taunting them, pushing or hitting them, ignoring them or leaving someone out of the things other children are doing together, or getting someone to do something by threatening them.

Children who look noticeable within a group are particularly vulnerable to being on the receiving end of taunting and teasing from other children but it is important to stress that just because your child has a disfigurement, it does not mean that they will automatically be teased or bullied.

Although appearance-related bullying is quite a common issue among all children, it is not the experience of every child who has a disfigurement or other condition affecting their appearance. It can often be difficult to identify and teachers may be unaware of bullying incidents, particularly in the playground at lunchtime. Recording incidents with your child, if they arise, will help show a pattern of bullying behaviour and help the school intervene.

Changing Faces defines bullying as:

Unkind behaviour repeated by a person in order to put down or hurt the person being bullied. It is not an isolated or one-off dispute and can be done face to face, over the phone, the internet, via email or text message.

Bullying behaviour may be:

- Verbal (e.g. name calling, insults etc.)
- Non-verbal (e.g. rude gestures)
- Physical (e.g. violence)
- Leaving out or singling out (e.g. spreading rumours)

- Ostracism (excluding from games/activities)
- Explicit or concealed

Signs to look out for:

- Your child is avoiding going to school by complaining about being sick or they are refusing to attend a specific lesson or activity (e.g. swimming, sports).
- A sudden falling out with friends that your child does not want to explain.
- Your child says, “It’s nothing”, but shows you through feelings and behaviour that something is upsetting them
- A sudden change in behaviour like withdrawal or lashing out, bed-wetting, nightmares, crying themselves to sleep, lower marks at school.
- Unexplained bruises or scratches, torn books or clothes.

Dealing with unkind and bullying behaviour

The advice to ‘ignore it’ is not an effective strategy as it is important to strengthen a child’s belief that adults can help and to increase their feelings of control and confidence. All reports of teasing, name-calling and bullying should be taken seriously and unkind behaviour challenged by an adult (e.g. parent, care giver, teacher).

If you are present, be firm and understanding. Let the other child know that it is not okay to name-call, threaten or bully and let them know what behaviour you would like to see. You may want to speak to their parent, carer or teacher.

How to support your child

- Discuss with your child and teacher a safe place or person for your child to go to, for example a ‘buddy bench’.

- Teach your child positive “self-talk” (see Resources at end of guide), for example: *“I can spend time with people I like.”* or *“I will go and find my friends.”*
- Encourage your child not to react to name calling because children that bully thrive on a reaction.
- Teach your child ways to leave the situation: Look confident, walk as calmly as possible, and use positive self-talk.
- Teach your child something to do instead if someone says something unkind.
- Encourage your child to stick up for themselves by using the ‘fogging’ technique (see Resources)
- Encourage your child to talk about their feelings about bullying.
- Encourage your child to play and hang around with supportive friends. They may need your help to distinguish friendly from not friendly people and establish them as friends, for example - do they smile, say hello or do they shove and use unkind nicknames.

“I dread the thought of Finn being bullied especially as his looks are going to be totally out of his control but feel that with...advice and support...I will be able to help him if it happens instead of falling to pieces”

If teasing and bullying is taking place at school, contact your child’s teacher in the first instance to let them know. Find out how they can help in line with the school anti-bullying policy or behaviour policy and be clear about what you expect to see happen. Take a look at the Resources section for how to create a bullying log to keep a record of bullying incidents.

If your child experiences on going difficulties with bullying at school, it is important that the school actively investigates and resolves the problem. You may want to seek further support and advice on how to manage the situation effectively.

Ask for a copy of your school's complaints procedure if you've spoken to a member of staff and you're still not satisfied. You should try to resolve the problem with them before taking your complaint further. If it remains unresolved by teaching staff or the head teacher, the complaint should go to the school's governing body or trustees as part of the school complaints process. Details of how to complain to the school governors or trustees are available at [**GOV.UK**](https://www.gov.uk).

Resources for supporting your child

Information sheet for staff

This information sheet can be written in consultation with your child's head teacher or deputy head teacher, prior to your child starting at their nursery or school. Please see examples on the next page:

New pupil, Lizzie Wentworth

(Photo of
Lizzie)

Notes for staff

Lizzie will be joining us in September. She has an unusual appearance due to a condition called 'Aperts'.

People who have Aperts Syndrome have a different shaped head due to the plates in their skull fusing together prematurely before birth. The bones in their hands and feet will usually have fused together as well.

Lizzie's looks noticeably 'different' – you will no doubt find yourself taking an extra-long look when you first see her, and so will everyone else.

Please use the following notes to guide your response to pupils who stare or ask about Lizzie. Lizzie is not yet quite ready to deal with curiosity from people she doesn't know very well, but she does talk about it with her friends sometimes – although she says it really isn't interesting compared with the other things they talk about.

What to say if you see a pupil staring at Lizzie:

1) Acknowledge the staring and offer a brief explanation e.g. 'You seem to have noticed Lizzie's hands. Lizzie has Aperts, which means that her head and hands have grown a bit differently. It doesn't bother us, don't let it bother you.'

2) Move the conversation on in some way e.g. 'You could try saying 'Hi' and telling her your name since you're both new at our school.'

Or:

'You're just in time to help me with... (e.g. the PE equipment)'

What to say if a pupil asks about Lizzie:

1) Acknowledge the question and offer a brief explanation e.g. 'It's called Aperts. Some people are born with it and it means their head and hands grow a bit differently. It doesn't bother Lizzie, don't let it bother you.'

2) Move the conversation on in some way e.g. 'Sometimes she sees a doctor at a hospital. Have you ever been to hospital?'

Or:

'That's a lovely picture. Is that your favourite colour? (If Lizzie is nearby and aware of the conversation:

'What's your favourite colour Lizzie?'

Helping Daisy model answers about her alopecia

Daisy has been confirmed to have a skin condition called Alopecia Universalis. She may not have body hair for the rest of her life, although there is a remote possibility that it will regrow during puberty. Her immune system attacks the hair follicles, there is no explanation why. Otherwise Daisy's general health is good.

We are being helped by Changing Faces to teach Daisy to be able to answer questions about her appearance for herself (in all areas of life, not just school). This puts other people at ease and allows ordinary social interaction to follow. At the moment she is comfortable with her class.

However, she is not yet equipped to deal with other children looking at her, asking a question or making a comment. This is causing her some challenges in wider school life. We would greatly appreciate your vigilance and intervention in these situations, or if questions arise at other times during school.

Daisy will learn from adult responses to the situations where anyone stares, comments, asks questions or just seems hesitant. By seeing/hearing staff consistently respond with the steps outlined below she will:

- Understand that people cannot help being concerned or curious, and that it can be handled in a straightforward way
- Respond with just enough information to reassure and settle the other party
- Move the conversation on in an appropriate way

The idea is that Daisy hears the conversation, so eventually she should just 'pick it up' for herself.

STEP ONE – GIVE A BRIEF EXPLANATION AND REASSURANCE

"Daisy has a skin condition called Alopecia; her hair may or may not grow back. She's perfectly well otherwise, and you can't catch it..."

STEP TWO – MOVING THE CONVERSATION ON IN A RELEVANT WAY

either a) showing an interest in the child that asked, i.e. ask a question back

or b) maintaining conversation but changing the subject: e.g. ".....so do you want to join in with....."

or c) ending the conversation e.g. ".....it's break time now, do you want to get your coat and go outside?"

We greatly appreciate your support in this aspect of Daisy's development and we are delighted with how happy she is with you.

Emma & Eamonn

Book bag letter for other parents

The book bag letter will help other parents to handle any questions from their own children about your child's appearance and will also enable them to respond positively to your child when they meet them.

Arrange with the school for your letter to go in the book bags of the other children in your child's class or year group on the first day, if starting a new school, along with any other information notices given out.

You could show your draft letter to a friend or your child's teacher if unsure about the wording, or consult one of our practitioners for advice. One parent, Julie, sought help from a Changing Faces Practitioner in drafting a letter in preparation for her son going into year one. Julie decided to adapt her letter so it was from her son's perspective.

"There are only 5 pupils including Finn in reception class so telling parents isn't really an issue yet but I may send out a letter when he starts in P1 next September... I'll put his picture on top like in your example but write something less formal..."

Hi, my name is Finn and just like your son or daughter, I'm starting P1. I'm looking forward to getting to know them and having lots of fun together in school.

Last summer I was diagnosed with a very rare non contagious genetic condition called Cherubism. This means that my upper and lower jawbones haven't developed properly and the bones have lots of cysts and fibrous tissue instead of solid bone. I will lose my baby teeth early and my adult teeth will not develop properly but it isn't dangerous or painful. It also means that over time the cysts will grow and my face will change shape. I don't look too different yet, just quite chubby cheeked and cute but this will change as I grow up. There is no treatment or cure for my condition but it should slow down or stop at the end of puberty.

If your son or daughter notices anything or asks questions about me please just explain to them that I have a condition called Cherubism, I was born this way and it doesn't hurt me. I am a very happy little boy, full of fun, energy and chat and look forward to getting to know you and your child during our time at school.

My Mum Julie and Dad Michael are happy to answer any questions you may have, please feel free to talk to them at any time.

Here are some other examples:

Some information about Jayden

Why is Jayden's skin and hair that colour?

Jayden has a condition called albinism.

It affects the production of melanin (a range of black, dark brown, reddish brown, or yellow pigments) in his skin, hair and eyes.

Why doesn't Jayden's sister have it too?

Although it is genetic and can run in families, not everyone who carries the gene has albinism.

Why do his eyes move so quickly?

It's called nystagmus and it's a part of his condition. Most people with albinism have this too.

Can he still see me?

Yes, but he can't see details when they're far away. Sometimes he uses a kind of microscope which works much better for him than regular glasses.

What treatment does Jayden have?

Albinism isn't treated, although specialists will keep a check on the health of his skin and eyes. You may notice him putting on high factor sun cream, which your children are welcome to do with him, and he will wear sunglasses when he goes out to play, particularly in the summer.

An extra note from Jayden's parents

In spite of Jayden's unusual appearance, he is a normal, bright and active boy. His albinism doesn't bother him, us or other people who know him. The world is full of different people and children are very accepting if pointed in the right direction by adults. Questions and worries should be answered honestly and anything you don't know, please feel free to ask us.



The following letter was put together by a mother and father who sought advice from Changing Faces.

Some Information about Daisy 2S

Dear Parents & Carers,

Following progression of Daisy's hair loss over the summer holidays, we would like to let you know what is happening, in case your child or children have any questions or concerns related to Daisy, and we would like you to be in a position to answer them openly.

Why has Daisy lost her hair?

Daisy has a skin condition called Alopecia Universalis. Her immune system has attacked the hair follicles. Currently, there is no scientific understanding why this happens, and there are varying types of Alopecia. We understand it to have been initiated by a high fever in 2012.

Does it affect her body in any other way?

Daisy's general health is otherwise very good, and she is not on any medication.

Will it grow back?

At the moment the Doctor's do not expect Daisy's hair to grow back. She may not have body hair for the rest of her life. However, there is a small possibility that it will regrow during puberty.

Is it contagious?

Fortunately Alopecia is not contagious. Although this is a question that children might ask, or be wondering.

Daisy continues to be a very enthusiastic, happy and active girl. She is getting on with life very normally, and appears bravely accepting of the Alopecia.

We have been advised that questions should be answered honestly, and this will also help Daisy grow confidently to answer them for herself. Research has shown that it is counterproductive for children to be told to not stare, or ask questions, when someone looks different. Being open & honest puts everyone at their ease. If there's anything you'd like to ask, please feel free to come up to us!

Many thanks

Eamonn & Emma

Teach Good “Self Talk”

How we think can make a difference to what we feel. Positive self-talk is something your child can try in any situation when they are feeling scared, upset or if they are getting angry and they want to regain control.

Help your child to identify what they are thinking when an unpleasant situation is developing. They may have thoughts such as ‘I’m scared’, or ‘I hate them’.

- Self-talk is a way of replacing a negative reaction - for example, replacing the thought “They make me feel scared” with “I don’t need to listen to this”.
- An example of good self-talk would be to think about their achievements and focus on positive relationships they have, e.g. “I have made three friends since I came here and I can go and find them”.

Teach “Fogging”

Fogging is an assertive technique that allows children to handle and cope with insults and verbal taunts. The aim for your child is to:

- Look confident
- Use a calm, friendly and puzzled tone of voice
- Use rehearsed phrases - “So!” or “Excuse me!” or “And your point is?”
- Then walk away feeling in control.

Fogging takes practice as well as courage so your child might want to try the technique out at home in a safe environment with a sibling or friend first.

For more details on techniques your child can use see our Children and Young People guides.

Creating a bullying a log/journal

If your child tells you that someone was unkind or hurt them, it is useful to record incidents in detail using a bullying log or journal. This isn’t always easy, so sit down with your child and try prompting them with the following questions:

1. Can you remember when it happened?
2. Can you remember where it happened?
3. What time of the day was it?
4. Was it one person or lots of people being unkind to you?
5. Do you know their names and which class they’re in?

6. What did they say or do?

You can make this a more positive experience for your child after discussing the above, by filling in the two extra columns which detail what your child knows to be true about him and what he wants. You could start by saying, 'That's not true though!' and follow this with questions like:

1. What do you like about yourself?
2. What do you know you're good at?
3. What do you like about the way you look?
4. Who are your friends?
5. What do your friends like about you?
6. What could be done to stop this from happening again?
7. Who could make this better for you? What could they do?

Example of a log:

1. Date:	2. Place:	3. Time:	4. Who?	5. What?	6. I know...	7. I want...
Mon 14 th October	Canteen	Lunch	Holly	Called me ugly	I'm not ugly. I have long silky brown hair and big green eyes	My friends and teachers to tell her to stop calling me names
Wed 16 th October	Playground	Morning break	Mina	Told Nicky not to play with me because I have germs	My eczema isn't catching and I have other people like Sam to play with	People to know you can't catch eczema from me

Completed journals

Arrange to speak with the class or form teacher in person about the incidents. This can be followed up in writing, so that you have a record of what was said and agreed upon as a plan of action.

Here are some examples of letters:

Dear Mr Miller,

Thank you for making the time to speak with me yesterday about the bullying that Ali has faced over the last week. Ali, as you know, is understandably upset by Matthew and Hamzah's name-calling and the threats they have made. I am really pleased that you will be monitoring the situation and that you will let me know how things progress. Ali will also inform you if anything like this happens again.

Could we also arrange a time over the next fortnight to speak about this again and see how things have developed?

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Shah

Dear Mrs Jones,

I have spoken with Ali's class teacher over the bullying he reported taking place in the boys' toilets. Despite discussing this with Mr. Miller, Matthew and Hamzah are still calling Ali names and threatening him. Can you please let me know what can be done to stop this from happening and how you and your staff will be able to monitor this situation? Would it possible for you to have staff and/or older children supervise the boys' toilets during break time?

I would really appreciate having a copy of the school bullying policy. Could I arrange to pick this up or would you be able to send this to me? I would also ask that you put a copy of this letter and your response onto Ali's file.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Shah

Summary

- It is understandable to have anxiety about your child making a school transition
- It can help to start preparing the ground early by setting up a meeting at your child's school
- Share information about your child - their development, strengths and needs, both educationally and socially
- Provide your child with something to say when people are curious about their looks
- It is really important for staff members know how to handle curiosity from other children
Teach school staff **Explain** – **Reassure** – **Distract** – **Assert** - **Humour** techniques
- Maximise your child's opportunities for positive social interactions
- If worried about bullying speak to a member of school staff
- Changing Faces offers support, advice and information

Supporting and advising

Changing Faces offers information, advice and support to children, parents and adults with scars, marks or conditions that affect their appearance.

Informing

We work to improve policy and practice in organisations. Through staff training and consultancy we help to create fair and inclusive environments.

Campaigning

We campaign for social change. We aim to promote a society in which people are treated fairly and equally.

Changing Faces
The Squire Centre
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This guide is also available, on request, in plain text and on CD

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