

***Practice* Based Scenario**

**Bullying accusations in a school setting**

**About this document**

This document is designed to take you through a practice-based scenario to help you reflect on what you might do if faced with a similar situation. It can be used to guide your thoughts and prompt discussion with your colleagues. Working through this document counts towards your continuing professional development (CPD). Your reflections on this document are not assessed and you do not have to send your responses to the RCSLT.

You can work through it on your own, with a colleague or supervisor, or in groups, e.g. as part of an RCSLT Hub or Clinical Excellence Network.

This document is broken into six parts:

1. **The scenario:** for you to read
2. **The issues to consider:** for you to gather your thoughts on practice issues relating to this scenario
3. **Next steps:** for you to plan out what you would need to do next
4. **Prompts for consideration:** RCSLT prompts for further consideration
5. **Sources of further information:** links to CQ Live themes
6. **Update your CPD diary:** for you to do

1. **The scenario**

**You work in a school and a child with SEMH keeps trying to run away from school.**

**When confronted by another member of the multi-disciplinary team, the child screams, “Not you! I know who you are. You’re a bully!”**

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**What do you do in this scenario?**

1. **The issues to consider**

**What do you need to consider?**

Think about the above scenario and its implications and jot down your notes about issues you may need to consider. Please feel free to use extra sheets of paper if you need. Or, if you are in a group, you may like to record on a whiteboard or flipchart.

1. **Next steps**

**What steps do you think you need to take next?**

1. **Prompts for consideration**

In this scenario, there are different elements to consider that will be specific to where you work. Remember that if you are faced with a similar situation you will need to think about it in relation to the frameworks within which you work, such as the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards, RCSLT professional guidance, local and national policies and also policies of your employer (or your own policies if practising independently). The list of prompts and resources that follow, however, will help with your thinking.

It is recommended that you think about the following prompt questions and formulate a considered strategy to deal with the problem.

Please note that the prompts and resources provided here are not exhaustive and do not constitute legal advice.

**Prompt questions to consider**

1. Does this fall under the HCPC code of ethics?
2. Is there a legal need to report concerns?
3. Do you have a duty of care to this child?
4. Are there safeguarding issues?
5. What are the risks if you do not get involved?
6. Who would you need to report concerns to?
7. Are you likely to need to record the incident to refer to in future?
8. What support or training may the member of the MDT need in order to respond appropriately in the future?
9. How might this be raised in a tactful manner?
10. How will you report the incident?
11. Is the child’s response to the staff member and accusations appropriate?
12. Why is the child repeatedly trying to run away from school?

**Possible next steps**

1. Refer to your organisation’s policies and procedures to ensure you follow the correct protocol for this incidence.
2. Establish the appropriate person to speak to and report the incident to ensure you address any safeguarding concerns.
3. Write a record of the incident and keep a record of every person you speak to, what is said and any action that is taken.
4. If appropriate identify and address training needs of the member of staff and establish how these can be conveyed to the individual tactfully.
5. If after due diligence it arises the child’s response to the staff member and accusations are related to his or her SEMH and an inaccurate interpretation of the member of staff’s behaviour, what strategies could be used to ameliorate the child’s feeling that he or she is being bullied, for example, social stories, relevant vocabulary, etc.
6. The child running away from school is likely to reflect how he or she is feeling in school. Are the bullying accusations relevant to this or are there other triggers. Consider referral to other professionals, e.g. a school counsellor or psychologist if they are not already part of the team around the child.
7. **Sources of further information**

**The following resources will support you in this area and can be found on the RCSLT website:**

[Professional accountability and autonomy – Reporting concerns about safety](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-5)

[Duty of care](https://www.rcslt.org/duty-of-care)

[Safeguarding](https://www.rcslt.org/safeguarding)

**External resources:**

[HCPC: Standards of conduct, performance and ethics](http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/standards/standardsofconductperformanceandethics/)

[National Autistic Society: social stories and comic strip conversations](http://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx)

1. **Update your CPD diary**

Working through this scenario counts towards your continuing professional development (CPD). Once you have completed this scenario, please record this learning and your reflections in your CPD diary.