

Write to Someone Who Needs Support

Suitable for:	Upper primary and secondary
Time:	20–30 minutes
Format:	Writing / reflection / discussion
Evergreen:	Yes

The idea

Advice can sound easy when we are not the person living through the situation.

This activity asks pupils to think carefully about what supportive words might actually help someone who is experiencing bullying.

What would you say to someone who needed support?

1. Meet the fictional character

Give the group a short fictional profile, for example:

Sam has recently started avoiding lunch because a group of pupils keep making jokes about them. Sam laughs along sometimes, but has begun spending more time alone and is worried that telling someone will make things worse.

Make clear that Sam is fictional.

2. Write a short message

Ask pupils to write a short message to Sam.

They might include:

- something they want Sam to know
- one practical suggestion
- one person Sam could consider talking to
- something a friend could do
- something an adult should do

The aim is not to produce a perfect answer.

3. Look at the advice

Ask groups to review some of the kinds of advice people often give.

For example:

- “Just ignore them.”
- “Stand up for yourself.”
- “Tell a teacher.”
- “Don’t let them see you’re upset.”
- “Fight back.”
- “Leave the group chat.”
- “Block them.”

Ask:

Could this help?

Could it be difficult or unsafe?

What information would we need before deciding?

This reinforces the idea that what works for one person may not work for another.

4. Turn advice into support

Choose one simple piece of advice, such as:

“Tell someone.”

Ask pupils to make it more useful.

For example:

“Is there an adult you trust? If you want, I could go with you.”

Or instead of:

“Leave the group chat.”

something like:

“Would leaving make things safer, or are there messages you need to keep? Could someone help you decide what to do?”

The point is to move from instructions towards support.

5. What should we not say?

Ask pupils:

What might make someone regret telling us?

Possible examples include:

- blaming them
- laughing
- saying it is not serious
- immediately taking over without explaining
- promising secrecy that cannot be kept
- demanding proof straight away
- telling them what they “should have done”

6. Rewrite the message

Give pupils a few minutes to improve their original message to Sam.

Encourage them to include **listening, choice and safety**, rather than only instructions.

Final reflection

Complete:

“Support is more useful when...”

and:

“One thing I would want someone to say to me is...”

Pupils do not have to share the second response.

Key message

Good support is not about having the perfect answer. It starts with listening, taking someone seriously and helping them find a safer next step.