

Hello! My name is Mursal Kharoti, I'm 17 and a student at Swakeleys Sixth Form. I will be starting Year 13 in September and will be studying Biology, English and of course, Psychology.

This summer, I will be carrying out my Nuffield research placement, here at Royal Holloway's Psychology department under the supervision of Dr. Alana James and for this week, Dr. Eilidh Cage. The Nuffield Research scheme aims to give sixth form/college students a chance to see what a professional research environment is like and work alongside experts in their field. I am to produce a report at the end of my placement on the specific subject I worked on, which is bullying!

Many journal articles later, I have come to understand that bullying is often an overlooked problem, brushed under the rug as being part of normal childhood development. However, previous research points to bullying having great effects on both the victim and the perpetrator in later life and detrimental effects on academic achievement. The research I am currently working on is how children define bullying during different ages and compared to teachers. It's this disconnect between these two groups which may explain why children feel that their school does little to tackle bullying, when in fact, the behaviour in question isn't even regarded as bullying by adults. Furthermore, the prevalence of social media has moved "traditional bullying" into unmonitored cyberspaces with terrible consequences. To investigate this, Dr. Alana's third year undergraduates conducted a study on primary and secondary school children, using 13 cards with stick figures demonstrating non-bullying and bullying situations with captions like "Natalie never lets Jean play." These cards were shown to groups of children, and were asked if it was bullying or not. Afterwards, they were also asked to suggest some ideas on how the victims can stop the bullying. The duration of the focus group task was recorded audibly.

I have been set the task of transcribing the audios, which at first was slow, but at the end of week one, I am getting in the swing of it. As well as this, Dr. Alana has been sending me articles to read on the subject, in preparation of my final report.

One week in, it's safe to say Psychological research is what I want to do in the future!