



Kingstone
HIGH SCHOOL

Building Respectful Communities



Module 2: Power, Influence, and Group Behaviour



Introduction

In Module 1, we explored the difference between conflict and bullying. We learned that bullying often involves repetition, harm, and a power imbalance. We also learned that understanding situations requires us to look at the bigger picture.

This raises another important question: if bullying often involves power, where does that power come from? Many people think of power as something obvious. They may picture physical strength, age, or size. However, power can take many forms. Sometimes it comes from popularity, confidence, influence, or a person's position within a group.

Influence is the ability to affect the behaviour, decisions, or attitudes of other people. Every day, people influence one another. Friends influence friends, groups influence individuals, and students influence their classmates.

Most of the time, this influence is positive. It can encourage cooperation, learning, and support. However, influence can also be used in ways that exclude, pressure, or harm others. Understanding how power and influence work helps us better understand why bullying can happen and why group behaviour often plays an important role.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- ☐ Explain what influence means.
- ☐ Understand how groups affect behaviour.
- ☐ Recognise why people sometimes join in with negative behaviour.
- ☐ Identify different forms of peer pressure.
- ☐ Understand the role of responsibility within groups.
- ☐ Reflect on how influence can be used positively.



Key Vocabulary

Influence	The ability to affect another person's behaviour or decisions.
Peer Pressure	Feeling encouraged or pressured to behave in a certain way because of others.
Group Behaviour	The way people behave when they are part of a group.
Responsibility	Being accountable for your actions and choices.
Bystander	Someone who witnesses a situation but is not directly involved.
Leadership	Influencing others through actions, decisions or behaviour.

Understanding Influence

Influence is a normal part of life. Most people have experienced situations where they have changed their mind because of friends, joined an activity because others were doing it, laughed because other people laughed or remained silent because nobody else spoke.

The important question is how that influence is used.

Positive influence can encourage:

Kindness
Inclusion
Confidence
Support

Negative influence can encourage:

Exclusion
Teasing
Unkind behaviour
Bullying

Understanding influence helps us think more carefully about our own choices.



Activity - Who Has Influence?

Think about the range of different people in the school community.
Who might influence others?

Popular students

☐

Teachers

☐

Family members

☐

Friends

☐

Older students

☐

Think About It

Does somebody need to be loud or popular to have influence?

Explain your answer:



Scenario - Ryan and Jake

Ryan has a large friendship group.

One of his friends is Jake.

Jake is confident, funny and popular.

Many students know who Jake is.

Ryan begins noticing something.

When Jake suggests an activity, people often follow.

When Jake tells a joke, people laugh.

When Jake shares an opinion, others often agree.



One lunchtime, Jake begins making jokes about another student called Noah.

A few people laugh, then more students, including Ryan, join in and laugh too.

Later that day, Ryan thinks about what happened. He asks himself a question:

“Would I have laughed if somebody else had made the same joke?” For the first time, Ryan wonders whether he had made his own choice or simply followed everyone else.

Think About It

Why do you think the students laughed?

Do you think Jake's influence affected what happened?

Looking Deeper - Why Others Join In



Most people want to feel accepted and experience a sense of belonging. It is therefore common for people to do things they know are wrong because of peer pressure.

People often want to:

Fit In

Be
Included

Feel
Valued

Maintain
Friendships

Sometimes this can make situations difficult. A student may know that something is wrong but worry that speaking up could affect their place within a group.

They may fear:

Being
Laughed At

Being
Excluded

Being
Targeted
Next

Understanding these pressures does not excuse harmful behaviour. However, it helps explain why making positive choices is not always easy.

Think About It

Why might somebody stay silent even when they know something is wrong?

How can friendship groups influence behaviour positively?



Activity - What Is Ryan Thinking?

Read each statement below. Which of these could explain why Ryan laughed?

- ☐ "Everyone else was laughing."
- ☐ "I didn't want attention on me."
- ☐ "I thought it was harmless."
- ☐ "Jake is my friend."
- ☐ "I didn't think about Noah's feelings."
- ☐ "I wanted people to like me."



Explain Your Thinking

Choose one statement from above. Explain why somebody might think this way:



Looking Deeper - The Power of Groups

Imagine one student making an unkind comment.

Now imagine ten students laughing at that comment.

The situation feels very different.

Being part of a group can increase people's confidence.

It can also reduce individual responsibility.

Sometimes people feel less accountable when they are surrounded by others.

They may think:

"It wasn't just me."

"Everybody else was doing it."

"I wasn't the main person involved."

However, being part of a group does not remove personal responsibility. Every individual still makes choices. Every individual still influences what happens next.





Scenario - Noah's Perspective

While Ryan is reflecting on the situation, Noah is thinking about it too. Noah remembers hearing the jokes. At first, he pretended not to care. He laughed along with everyone else.

However, later that evening, he kept thinking about what happened. What upset him most was not necessarily Jake's comment. It was seeing so many people laugh.

Noah began wondering:

"Did they all agree?"

"Do people actually think that about me?"

"Why didn't anybody say anything?"



The next day, Noah avoided spending time near the group.

Although the incident seemed small to some students, the impact felt much bigger to him.

Think About It

Why might Noah's experience be different from Ryan's?

Why might seeing other people laugh make the situation worse?



Activity - Mia's Involvement

Mia witnessed everything that happened.
She did not laugh. She did not join in.
She also did not say anything.

At the time, she felt uncomfortable.
Part of her thought the comments were unfair.
Another part of her worried that speaking up might attract attention to herself.

Later, Mia continued thinking about the situation.
She began asking herself:

"Did staying silent make a difference?"

"Could I have done something?"

"What responsibility do bystanders have?"



Imagine you were Mia. Which responses below might be helpful?
Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Change the subject of the conversation.
- ☐ Check to see if Noah was ok later that day.
- ☐ Tell a member of staff or a trusted adult.
- ☐ Encourage the group to stop.
- ☐ Include Noah in future activities.
- ☐ Pretend nothing happened.
- ☐ Confront Jake directly in front of the group.

Activity - The Most Helpful Response?



Explain Your Thinking

Which option do you think would be the most helpful?

Explain why you have chosen this option:

Looking Deeper - Positive Influence



Influence is not always negative.

In fact, positive influence can have far more impact than negative influence.

Think about students who:

Include
Others

Encourage
Peers

Support
Friends

Show
Kindness

These students influence people too. The difference is that they use their influence in a positive manner to lift up those around them.

Leadership is not just about being popular. Leadership is about the choices people make and the example they set.



Activity - Positive or Negative Leader?

Read each statement.

Decide whether it demonstrates positive or negative influence.

Statement 1

A student encourages others to include somebody who is new to the school.

☐

Positive

☐

Negative

Explanation:

Statement 2

A student challenges an unkind comment respectfully.

☐

Positive

☐

Negative

Explanation:

Statement 3

A student excludes somebody to gain popularity.

☐

Positive

☐

Negative

Explanation:



Scenario - Ryan's Reflection

By the end of the week, Ryan has learned something important. At first, he focused mainly on the people who started situations. Now he realises that influence can affect everybody's choices.

He understands that:

Joining in is a choice.
Laughing along is a choice.
Staying silent is a choice.
Speaking up is a choice.



Ryan begins recognising that responsibility does not only belong to the loudest person in the group. It belongs to everybody involved.

Think About It

What do you think Ryan has learned about influence?

How can small choices affect other people?

Key Learning Point

Small Choices Can Influence Others

People often focus on major actions. However, small choices matter too.

A laugh. A comment. Joining in. Staying silent. Speaking up.

These choices can influence what happens next.

Positive influence helps build respectful communities. Negative influence can contribute to harm. Understanding influence helps people make more thoughtful choices.

Personal Reflection

Think about a time when somebody influenced one of your decisions.

You do not need to include names. What happened?

Was the influence positive, negative or a mixture of both?

What did you learn from the experience?

Extended Reflection

Advice to a Younger Student

A younger student asks: "How can people use influence positively?"

Write a response explaining what influence means, how groups affect behaviour, why people sometimes join in, the importance of responsibility, and how people can be positive influences:

[illegible]

Module Reflection

One thing I learned about influence is:

One thing I learned about peer pressure is:

One thing I learned about responsibility is:

One thing I learned about groups is:

One thing I will remember from this module is:

Key Messages to Remember

- Influence affects everybody.
- People join in with behaviour for different reasons.
- Being part of a group does not remove responsibility.
 - Small choices can have a big impact.
- Positive influence helps create respectful communities.
 - Everybody has the ability to influence others.

Staff Review



- ☐ Student understands the concept of influence.
- ☐ Student can identify examples of peer pressure.
- ☐ Student understands the role of responsibility within groups.
- ☐ Student can reflect on the impact of group behaviour.
- ☐ Student can identify positive ways to influence others.
- ☐ Student is ready to progress to Module 3.