



ISLE *of*  
WIGHT  
C O U N C I L  
Directorate of Education and  
Community Development

# Preventing Bullying - Guidelines for Schools

May 2001

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## Preface

These guidelines have been developed to encourage, support and extend good practice. They are intended to help schools develop whole school policies and procedures, preventative group work and individual programmes where appropriate.

The whole area of bullying is a difficult one for pupils, parents and teachers. It requires sensitivity, consistency and careful communication and represents a real challenge for management and professional practice in schools.

All schools should be aware that:

- as part of the school's policy on the management of behaviour, they must have a clear policy on anti-bullying;
- governors have a responsibility to ensure that such a policy exists.

## Context

- <sup>1</sup>according to DfEE statistics at least 1 in 4 pupils report being bullied at some time in their school life;
- many kinds of behaviour can constitute bullying;
- the incidence of bullying and its effects on pupils can be significantly reduced through effective policies and procedures;
- procedures in school for dealing with bullying should be non-punitive and must avoid aggravating the physical or emotional distress felt by bullied pupils.

A range of education professionals are available to help. Educational psychologists, behaviour therapy and support specialists and education welfare officers can provide help to schools in developing policies, in undertaking preventative work and with individual case work.

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<sup>1</sup> Social Inclusion Pupil Support 10/99

## Introduction

All children young people and adults have the right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and that is free from harassment and bullying.

"The emotional distress caused by bullying in whatever form – be it racial, or as a result of a child's appearance, behaviour or special educational needs, or related to sexual orientation – can prejudice school achievement, lead to lateness or truancy and, in extreme cases, end with suicide. A third of girls and a quarter of boys are at some time afraid of going to school because of bullying. Bullying is usually part of a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident. Pupils should be encouraged to report any bullying to staff or to older pupils they can trust. Low report rates should not of themselves be taken as proof that bullying is not occurring"<sup>2</sup>.

A consequence for bullies is that they learn that aggressive behaviour helps them to get their own way. In this way successful bullying can contribute to anti-social behaviour in later life.

However, the consequences of bullying are not limited to individual bullies and victims. Schools in which bullies go unchallenged can give the message to pupils that teachers do not care or that bullying behaviour is acceptable. Schools can become unhappy, stressful places, not just for victims who may truant to avoid being bullied, but for all those who witness bullying and feel threatened or helpless, or who are persuaded to join in for fear that their turn will be next.

"Recent studies of bullying in schools suggest that the problem is widespread...research suggests that bullying causes considerable suffering to individual pupils and has a damaging effect on school atmosphere"<sup>3</sup>.

Most bullying identified in research is of the passive type, such as name-calling. About one third of bullied children experience physical attacks or threats of violence.

To promote "ownership" and implementation of a school's policy, it is recommended that policy development involves the headteacher, governors, staff and pupils.

To assist this, a major study of bullying by the DfEE led to the production and distribution of an anti-bullying pack for all schools entitled "Bullying – don't suffer in silence" (HMSO 1994).

(An updated version was released in September 2000).

Where schools have an anti-bullying policy, we hope the guidelines set out in this document will be useful in reviewing their effectiveness.

These guidelines cover three levels of approach:

- whole school approach (policy)
- when it happens: advice for schools and parents
- working with children through the curriculum

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<sup>2</sup> Social Inclusion Pupil Support 10/99 4.29

<sup>3</sup> The Elton Report 1989

# Whole School Approach

## **1.1.Responsibilities**

- **All** schools must have an anti-bullying policy
- **Governors** are charged with ensuring that a policy exists. The governing body monitors implementation through the headteacher.

## **Legal Responsibilities**

Teachers and others responsible for the care of pupils must be aware of the following:

### **The role of the headteacher in LEA maintained schools:**

"Section 154(3) of the Education Act 1996 requires the head to determine measures (which may include the making of rules and provision for enforcing them) to be taken with a view to:

- promoting, among pupils, self-discipline and proper regard for authority,
- encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils,
- securing that the standard of behaviour of pupils is acceptable, and
- otherwise regulating the conduct of pupils.

The headteacher shall, in determining any such measures:

- act in accordance with any written statement of general principles provided for him by the governing body, and
- have regard to any guidance that they may offer in relation to particular matters.

The headteacher shall make any such measures generally known within the school."

In accordance with the above responsibilities DfEE Circular 8/94 regards it to be important that heads should:

- take a lead in defining the aims of the school in relation to standards of behaviour
- create conditions for establishing wide agreements of those standards and how they will be achieved
- ensure that the standards are consistently and fairly applied.

DfEE Circular 10/99, 4.30 states:

"Headteachers have a legal duty to take measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. All teaching and non-teaching staff, including lunchtime supervisors, should be alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly. Pupils may see failure to respond to incidents or allegations as tolerating bullying. As bullying tends to occur during break time, schools will wish to ensure they have strategies covering play and break time, and all relevant staff receive appropriate training."

In England and Wales, since September 1999, Section 61(4)(B) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires that "The Head Teacher shall determine measures (which may include the making of rules, and provision for enforcing them) to be taken with a view to encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils". The difficulties facing schools as they tackle this issue are not to be underestimated.

## **The role of the teacher**

"The teacher's duties include the maintenance of good order and discipline among the pupils and the safeguard of their health and safety. These are duties required to ensure the efficient conduct of the education process and also to protect pupils against causing harm to themselves and, more importantly, to other pupils.

The teacher has a duty of care to exercise disciplinary control. It follows that, if one pupil caused injury to another, the teacher may bear a responsibility if it can be shown that the injury occurred as a result of the teacher's failure to maintain order. A great deal will depend on the circumstances of the incident.

Teachers cannot reasonably be expected to foresee every incident nor, of course, to be everywhere on the school premises at the same time.

Further, a teacher is not under a duty to run the risk of personal injury by, for example, breaking up a fight, unless it can be done without the likelihood of harm to the teacher. Moreover, if the injured pupil was involved in misbehaviour, issues of contributory negligence may arise."<sup>4</sup>

Teachers and those responsible for the care of pupils should also try to follow the policy and guidelines which apply to the context of their own school.

The Bradford Smart v West Sussex CC Court Case noted that it was still of vital importance that the Defendant was able to provide documentary evidence showing a rigid compliance with its bullying policy and thereby defeat a number of factual allegations made by the Claimant. The importance of documentary retention cannot be overstated.<sup>5</sup>

Schools may wish to ensure that their policies comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

*N.B. The law and existing DfEE guidance on this topic both comply with the Human Rights Act.*

## **1.2. Definitions of Bullying**

The school must have an agreed definition of bullying and evidence suggests that ownership and acceptance of a definition is promoted by consideration of both "given" definitions and those derived through consultation with teachers, governors, pupils and parents.

Definitions

"A sufficient definition is the systematic abuse of power."  
Smith Sharp 1994

"Only persistent targeting of a victim can amount to bullying."  
Mr J Smart, Bradford Smart v West Sussex CC

8.11.00

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<sup>4</sup> The Head's Legal Guide: Croner

<sup>5</sup> Bullying: 8<sup>th</sup> November 2000

"A person is bullied when he or she is exposed regularly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons."

Olweus 1984

"Bullying is long-standing violence, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or a group and directed against an individual who is not able to defend himself in the actual situation."

Roland 1989

"Bullying is behaviour which can be defined as the repeated attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal, by those in a position of power, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification."

Besag 1989

"An attitude rather than an act. It can be identified as bullying only by measuring the effects the acts have on the vulnerable child."

Besag 1989

In a landmark decision, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2000, Court awarded damages solely for verbal bullying.<sup>6</sup>

#### **WAY FORWARD**

- at a staff meeting brainstorm (without discussion) definitions of bullying, or better still collect them in writing and display (anonymously)
- discuss and agree definitions that the majority of staff endorse
- at a governors' meeting repeat the above, or invite jointly with school staff
- consider using a questionnaire; undertake a survey using a structured interview with pupils, parents and teachers
- complete a similar exercise with governors or ask them to join the teaching staff discussion
- compare school derived definitions of bullying with those above and in the literature.

### ***1.3. Identification and Recording***

Schools should consider establishing a base line. This could be completed through an in-school survey to establish:

How many pupils reported:

- being bullied "sometimes" or more frequently
- being bullied once a week or more frequently
- that they bully others "sometimes" or more frequently.

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<sup>6</sup> C.V. Trafford MBC

## WAY FORWARD

Consider the following prior to a school survey:

- plan how to preserve **confidentiality** for respondents
- plan the **format** so that it's short, user-friendly and easy to interpret
- do the pupils **understand the reason** for the survey?
- do the pupils **understand the meaning** of the term bullying?
- how is the **data collected**: where and when does this happen?
  
- schools must record all reported or observed bullying in sufficient depth and accuracy in order to effectively monitor their bullying policy
- reporting mechanisms should be incorporated in whole school policy. Procedures should be cross-referenced with the school's discipline and behaviour policy.

### **1.4. Effective Anti-Bullying Policy**

In developing (or reviewing) an effective anti-bullying policy, governors and headteachers need to answer key questions. The Advisory Centre for Education offer the following checklist:

- Does the school already have whole school policies and strategies which specifically address bullying?
- If so how are they being implemented and are they effective?
- How were these policies developed?
- How do pupils know what the school's policy on bullying is?
- Does the school's anti-bullying policy apply to staff and parents?
- Is there someone that a victim can talk to in confidence?
- How do pupils complain about bullying and are complaints dealt with effectively and quickly?
- Do pupils have confidence in the complaints procedure and are they involved in it?
- How does the school support victims?
- Does the school keep a record of bullying incidents to look for common themes and pinpoint the areas in which specific intervention would be useful?
- When did the school last look at how the playground is being used and whether it is a place which caters for the variety of play needs which pupils have?
- How does the school involve parents in its anti-bullying work?
- How are pupils encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and others?
- What opportunities are there for pupils to discuss safely what is happening in their class or in the school in general?
- Does the school value individuality and nurture the emotional life of its pupils?
- In short, does the ethos of the school – its general atmosphere and purpose – encourage or discourage bullying?

ACE Bulletin, number 34, March/April 1990

Randal felt the surrounding community may be an important factor in school bullying. This may be borne in mind when developing a policy.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Randal PE (1996) A Community Approach to Bullying, Trentham Books Ltd.

Eslea & Smith (1998), in their evaluation of the DfEE's anti-bullying pack "Don't Suffer in Silence" HMSO, found this pack to be useful in developing schools' policies and anti-bullying strategies. Most approaches were seen positively, with the exception of schools tribunals or bully courts. An update is now available and may be considered useful in developing an Anti-Bullying policy for schools.

Governors and headteachers need to review all aspects of bullying. In *The No Blame Approach* (Bristol, 1993) Maines and Robinson make reference to:

- **pupil – pupil** bullying
- **staff – pupil** bullying
- **staff – staff** bullying
- **pupil – staff** bullying

Whilst these guidelines are concerned primarily with **pupil – pupil** bullying, it is acknowledged that **all of the above forms of bullying exist and need to be considered.**

## **1.5. Implementation**

The following advice is drawn from materials developed by Leeds City Council and offers a range of practical action suggestions for governors and headteachers to consider:

### **WAY FORWARD**

#### **Communication:**

- maintain an anti-bullying working party; include pupils; circulate minutes
- include a copy of the policy in pupils' planners and in the staff handbook
- refer frequently to the anti-bullying policy in assemblies
- hold specific assemblies on updates on the anti-bullying policy
- ensure regular good communication with parents through parents' meetings and newsletters
- ensure references are made to "anti-bullying" in school publications
- keep staff informed of developments through staff bulletin boards
- keep pupils informed through notice boards
- encourage pupil suggestions about bullying through a suggestion box scheme

#### **Special Events:**

- hold an annual poster competition
- ask pupils to design an anti-bullying logo
- focus on co-operation during a positive behaviour day or week
- organise a "drama" event so that pupils can show their version of concerns regarding bullying in their school and positive solutions against it

#### **Other Aspects of School Organisation:**

- increase positive supervision during breaks and between lessons
- look at the beginning and ending of the day arrangements. Should they be staggered for different year groups?
- cover for absent colleagues
- identify "trouble spots" in the physical layout of the school and develop routines to improve things
- monitor the physical environment – make it as attractive and "owned" as possible!
- devise ways of rewarding non-aggressive behaviours
- monitor attendance, and work to improve it
- look at environmental factors on aggressive behaviour (movement, noise, light, access to facilities, design etc)
- develop a timetable which is user-friendly and offers tutor time
- consider developing a schools council

#### **Review the Policy Annually**

- mini-survey of pupils/parents to see how effective the policy is

# Dealing with Bullying

**The school policy on bullying should relate to other school policies on behaviour management and special needs. It should also be informed by equal opportunities policies and child protection procedures.**

## **Working with individuals**

Work with individual or groups of children is carried out for two reasons:

- to reduce the likelihood of instances of bullying occurring
- to respond to the needs of children who have been bullied and those children responsible for the bullying.

## **Preventative Measures**

### **2.1. Ethos**

**Schools have the duty to teach those values, attitudes and skills which foster mutual respect and caring in their children.**

Preventative measures will only be effective if they are undertaken as early as possible. It follows therefore that particular attention needs to be given to the topic of bullying early on in children's school life and early in each new school year.

#### **WAY FORWARD**

- establish school rules which demonstrate caring behaviour, and ensure that they are understood by all children
- specify clearly those types of behaviour which are considered to be "bullying" and therefore unacceptable
- specify clearly what sanctions will follow bullying behaviour
- regularly remind children in assembly or on notices etc. of the importance of respectful and caring behaviour to be shown to everyone

### **2.2. Curriculum**

The PSHE curriculum (Personal and Social Health Education) should explicitly aim to ensure that all children acquire positive social attitudes by teaching children how to relate to and respect other children. This curriculum should permeate all aspects of school life and be thoroughly integrated into the wider curriculum wherever possible. Every member of staff has the responsibility to support and foster this curriculum, as role models.

Schools need to have structures in place which ensure that issues of bullying are routinely addressed through the classroom curriculum.

### **WAY FORWARD**

- have a designated member of staff to monitor the delivery of the personal, social and health curriculum
- ensure continuity and progression when looking at relationships and social attitudes that may contribute to bullying behaviour

### **2.3. Relationships**

A minority of children find it difficult to relate to other children. Children experiencing these difficulties will require additional and more intensive help. Children who have learning, sensory or physical difficulties appear to be particularly vulnerable to bullying.

### **WAY FORWARD**

- draw up individual educational programmes and/or a Pastoral Support Plan for those children experiencing interpersonal and peer relationship difficulties <sup>8</sup>
- develop differential personal and social curriculum materials (e.g. social skills curriculum)
- closely monitor those children with special educational needs
- consider using Circle of Friends <sup>9</sup>

### **2.4. Training and Support**

The Isle of Wight LEA provides training and support to schools who wish to broaden their understanding and knowledge of individual and group approaches to dealing with bullying. Non-punitive approaches which are currently found to be effective when working with teachers include:

*The No Blame Approach*, Maines B and Robinson G, Lame Duck Publishing, Bristol, 1993

*Broken Toy*, Brown T, Robinson G and Maines B, Lame Duck Publishing, Bristol, 1993

*Turn Your School Round*, Mosley J, LDA 1993

*Circle Time, Developing Circle Time and Coming Round to Circle Time*, Bliss T, Tetley J, Robinson G, Lame Duck Publishing, Bristol

*All for Alex*, booklet and video, Maines B, Lucky Duck Publishing

<sup>8</sup> Social Inclusion Pupil Support 10/99

<sup>9</sup> Ref. If you wish for further assistance and guidance in the use of Circle of Friends please contact the Educational Psychology Department.

**When young people feel safe to talk about bullying they are more likely to report incidents to staff, expecting some helpful intervention. This means that there may be an increase in the number of times staff are asked to respond, even though there is less bullying. This should be taken into consideration when evaluating the success of any intervention measures.**<sup>10</sup>

## ***2.5. Principles for the Management of Incidents***

- a secure environment should be provided in which incidents can be reported confidently
- pupils who have been bullied should be made to feel safe
- all pupils should be shown that bullying is taken seriously
- teachers should respond calmly and consistently to incidents of bullying
- the school should protect and support all parties while the issues are resolved
- the person who has done the bullying, and those who may have colluded, should be encouraged (not threateningly) to behave in a more acceptable way. Interventions should be monitored and followed up appropriately at the individual, group or whole school level

When considering how to respond, staff need to be aware of the following issues:

### 1. Natural responses:

#### *Private detective mode*

It may seem quite natural to those presented with allegations of bullying to slip into private detective mode and attempt to "get to the bottom of things" and "identify the culprit". This is likely to be a relatively fruitless exercise, unsuccessful, and unhelpful to the bullied person. **It may also infringe child protection principles in that it may incur additional emotional stress for the bullied child.**

### 2. Expecting the bullied pupil to change:

#### *Assertiveness training*

Pupils who report being bullied are often advised and urged to change their behaviour in some way either by parents, teachers or through group work. A child can be advised to "stand up for yourself", "hit back", "walk away", "pretend you don't care", and each time they fail they just feel worse. They are likely to feel that it is their own fault that this is happening to them. It is not. **Whatever their own inadequacy or difficulty, it is not their fault and it is not their responsibility to stop it. It is our responsibility and we must make that message loud and clear if we are not to compound their unhappiness.**

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<sup>10</sup> Follow up survey of the DfEE Anti-Bullying Pack for Schools, its use and the development of anti-bullying work in schools (DfEE), Smith P K and Madsen M (1997)

**It may be helpful to follow these steps within the school's policies and procedures for dealing with bullying:**

**WAY FORWARD**

- **Be available** Break the code of secrecy. Make it known that you are ready to listen. Provide immediate support.
- **Listen to the child** Ask the bullied child how she or he is feeling and then who was involved.
- **Record** Ensure the incident is recorded and that reports are collated.
- **Respond** Ensure that your response is non-aggressive and reflects understanding of action known to lead to the resolution of bullying situations and the reduction in the likelihood of future bullying incidents. Identify pupils with long-term needs requiring a development programme.
- **Follow up** Review progress and evaluate policies and intervention

***2.6. Working with Parents***

**It is essential to involve parents where bullying has taken place.** The most effective emphasis in meetings with parents is on joint problem solving. The aim of such a meeting is to minimise the likelihood of further bullying regardless of whether one is talking about the child who has bullied or the one who has been bullied.

Careful planning is necessary to retain the joint problem solving focus in the face of such an emotive subject.

**WAY FORWARD**

Ensure that:

- parents have been given enough notice to attend the meeting
- the meeting is informal but uninterrupted
- parents are clear about the joint problem solving focus
- all relevant information is available
- parents have an opportunity to have their say and express their feelings about the situation
- the meeting is purposeful and ends on a positive note

## **2.7. Advice for Parents**

Although it is understandable that you may feel angry, upset or annoyed that your child has been bullied, it is important to remember that one of your child's greatest worries may be that the bullying could increase through your involvement. The primary concern for your child will be that the bullying stops. Using the following strategies can greatly assist in supporting your child.

If your child is bullied:

- stay calm but show that you are supportive, avoid dwelling on sensitive issues
- reassure your child that you are sympathetic and will work with him/her to help resolve the bullying.
- try to help him or her to see the difficulty as a problem that can be solved
- encourage your child to talk about it, but be patient as she or he may be distressed
- ask your child if they can see ways of changing things
- talk to staff at your child's school about the bullying and work with them to improve the situation
- help everyone by trying to keep a sense of proportion in the situation

## **Work with Children after Reported Bullying**

### **2.8. The Child Who is Bullied**

*Work with children that follows any discovery or report of bullying must scrupulously avoid aggravating the bullied child's physical or emotional distress.*

Teachers need to take particular care that, in following up a complaint of bullying, they do not expose the bullied child to risk of even more bullying. They should take all reasonable measures to ensure that the bullied child is supported and protected. Interventions which appear to be particularly sensitive to the needs of all children are those in which more general problem solving strategies are modelled.

#### **WAY FORWARD**

- provide an opportunity for discussion with the child who has been bullied
- avoid embarrassing and shaming the bullied child by focusing on a particular incident when the child is present
- use supportive children to ensure that the bullied child is befriended and protected, e.g. in going to and from school

## **2.9. Self-Esteem**

Children who are bullied tend to have very low self-esteem. They feel guilty and worthless and, because they sometimes lack self-assertion skills, they are targeted by the kind of children who themselves bolster their own low levels of self-esteem by physically hurting, mocking and shaming weaker peers.

Class teachers and staff generally need to be aware of the ways in which school practices may enhance or diminish children's levels of self-esteem.

### **WAY FORWARD**

- ensure that all children are **spoken to respectfully**
- ensure that all children are **noticed and valued**
- ensure that all children have access to **rewards and privileges**
- acknowledge that **effort is more important than achievement**

## **2.10. The Child who Bullies**

Schools should work hard with those children who bully others to ensure that they receive the help that will prevent further bullying. Bullies themselves are frequently bullied and may need help to see that bullying is not acceptable behaviour. If they do not receive appropriate help, bullies often go on to become serious problems to society in other ways.

**It is useful for staff to acknowledge that children sometimes bully because they have not learned appropriate ways of interacting with their peers. Modelling and role play will often be required. Approaches which are solely punitive are not advisable, since evidence suggests that they do not prevent further bullying and in fact may reinforce the belief that "might is right".**

### **WAY FORWARD**

- specifically teach interpersonal and social skills to children who have not acquired them. Modelling and role play will often be required
- ensure that there are serious but not threatening talks with any child found bullying
- use non-punitive approaches which involve all participants, including bystanders
- explain the problem and help everyone to understand how the bullied child feels
- share the responsibility for the problem
- involve the group in sharing ideas and improving the situation
- include a later review of progress

## Further Reading

Those wishing to undertake a more extensive review of the literature may consult the full reference list in the DfEE anti-bullying pack and are invited to contact the Educational Psychology Service for further advice.

## References

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Maines B (1998) *All for Alex – A Circle of Friends (Video)*: Lucky Duck

### Information for Parents

Alexander J. (1998) Your Child Bullying: Practical and easy to follow advice; Element Books

Elliot M. (1997) 101 Ways to Deal with Bullying: A guide for parents; Stoughton

Kidscape (1990) Keeping Safe: A practical guide to talking with children

Lawson S. (1994) Helping Children Cope with Bullying; Sheldon Press

Lindenfield G. Confident Children: A parents guide to helping children feel good; Thorsens

Goldman D. Emotional Intelligence

Melor A. (1993) Bullying and How to Fight It: A guide for families; Scottish Council for Research in Education (15 St John Street, Edinburgh EH5 5JR)

Pearce J. (1989) Fighting, Teasing and Bullying: Simple and effective ways to help your children; Wellingborough, Thorsons

### Workplace and Adult Bullying

Andrew Adams Trust

Shalamar House, 24 Derek Avenue, Hove, East Sussex BN3 4PF

A trust set up in memory of the late expert on workplace bullying. For fact sheets, brochures and information about training and advice workshops send an A4 SAE.

Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Website: [www.askatl.org.uk/home/folder.htm](http://www.askatl.org.uk/home/folder.htm)

The website contains guidance resource "Bullying at Work: A guide for Teachers"

NASUWT

Tel. 0121 4536150 (ask for publications or communications)

Publication "No Place to Hide – Confronting Workplace Bullies"

NUT

Website: [www.teachers.org.uk](http://www.teachers.org.uk)

Publication: "Harassment and Workplace Bullying in Schools"

NAHT

Website: [www.teachers.org.uk](http://www.teachers.org.uk)

### Counselling Services for Adults

Teacherline 0800 0562561

Confidential, free telephone counselling service for teachers available 24 hours per day, seven days per week throughout the year (funded by teacher unions and government)

Useful websites:

European Conference on Bullying [www.gold.ac.uk/euconf](http://www.gold.ac.uk/euconf)

Peer Support Systems in Schools [www.metalhealth.org.uk/peer/forum.htm](http://www.metalhealth.org.uk/peer/forum.htm)

[www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)

[www.luckyduck.co.uk](http://www.luckyduck.co.uk)

[www.roehampton.ac.uk/social/depts/psy/psn/index](http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/social/depts/psy/psn/index)

[www.uclan.ac.uk/science/psychol/bully](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/science/psychol/bully)

[www.gold.ac.uk/tmr](http://www.gold.ac.uk/tmr)

[www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/bullying](http://www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/bullying)

[www.safechild.org](http://www.safechild.org)

[www.bbc.co.uk/education/archive/bully/help.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/archive/bully/help.shtml)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.kiscape.org.uk](http://www.kiscape.org.uk)

Scottish Council for Research in Education [www.scre.ac.uk/bully](http://www.scre.ac.uk/bully) (website has a lot of useful information and resources on bullying)

Anti Bullying Campaign [www.fife-hpd.demon.co.uk/mhweb/abc.htm](http://www.fife-hpd.demon.co.uk/mhweb/abc.htm); email

[Anti\\_Bullying@compuserve.com](mailto:Anti_Bullying@compuserve.com)

NSPCC National Protection Helpline [www.nspcc.org.uk/fullstop/education](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/fullstop/education)

DfEE [www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/pages/familiesindex.html](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/pages/familiesindex.html)

## Organisations Offering Advice

Please note that not all these organisations are solely (or primarily) concerned with bullying. This list is not comprehensive.

- **Advisory Centre for Education**  
Tel. 0171 354 8321 (2.00 – 5.00pm) Advice line for parents – England and Wales only
- **Anti-Bullying Campaign**  
185 Tower Bridge Road, London, Tel. 0171 378 1446 (9.30am – 5.00pm), Fax 0171 3788374  
ABC offers help, support and advice to parents and children, victims and bullies. ABC will also refer people to other organisations who can help.
- **Child Line**  
Tel. 0800 1111. Or write to Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR. Free 24 hour helpline offering confidential counselling to children and young people in trouble or danger.
- **Children's Legal Centre**  
20 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN. Advice line Tel. 0171 359 6251 (2.00 – 5.00pm). General enquiries: 0171 359 9392 (10.00am – 1.00pm; 2.00 – 5.00pm) Free and confidential service; or at University of Essex, Tel. 01206 873820.
- **Kidscape**  
152 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TR. Tel. 0171 730 3300  
Publications and advice for parents, teachers and children.
- **Parentline**  
Westbury House, 57 Hart Road, Thundersley, Essex SS7 3PD. National office Tel. 01268 757077.  
Parentline groups are run by trained volunteer parents who want to help other parents. Local groups exist throughout England. Parents should consult their local telephone directory.
- **Parent Partnership**  
11 Orchard Street, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 1JZ. Tel. 01983 821999
- **NSPCC**  
National Child Protection Helpline 0800 800500  
(7 days per week – for hearing difficulties 0800 0560566)  
As well as offering telephone support on child protection matters, NSPCC has various materials and projects related to schools and bullying.
- **Mencap**  
123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT, Tel. 0207 4540454, Fax 0207 6965540  
"Bullying – Living in Fear" (2000) is the first nation-wide study into bullying experienced by adults with learning disabilities. The report calls for awareness programmes about learning disabilities and disability discrimination to be incorporated into the National Curriculum. Order a copy of the report from [information@mencap.co.uk](mailto:information@mencap.co.uk)

- **Department for Education and Employment (DfEE)**

A resource pack "Bully don't suffer in silence" was sent to all schools by the DfEE in 1994 and a revised version should be available soon. A new website on bullying has been developed with simple practical guidance for parents, young people and teachers. (see Useful Websites)

# How Well is Your Policy Working?

## Self-Evaluation Checklist

A key question about any new development is, "How good is it?" You will want to know how well your school's anti-bullying policy is working. The questions below form a self-evaluation checklist.

### 1. Bullying Incidents

- How many bullying incidents were reported last term? Is this higher or lower than last term? Is this "good" or "bad". Who reported them?
- What kinds of bullying took place?
- Were particular pupils, age groups or locations involved?
- What can be inferred from this analysis about procedures for reporting incidents?
  - are the procedures clear?
  - are the procedures being used?
- If there are patterns to last term's incidents, what can be done to avoid a repetition this term?

### 2. Supporting Victims

- Is there someone pupils can talk to in confidence? Who? Has this person (or have these people) been trained in dealing with bullying?
- How many parents of victims have been:
  - informed
  - consultedabout a course of action?
- What strategies in supporting victims seem to have worked?

### 3. Working with the School Community

- Who has been active in developing and implementing the school policy?
  - teachers
  - pupils
  - other
  - parents
  - non-teaching staff
  - school/governing body
  - community groups

- How have they been involved?
  - in-service training
  - mapping exercises
  - discussion
  - curriculum development
  - school, drama, musical etc.
  - other
- Is there any member of staff with special expertise in tackling bullying? If so, can this expertise be developed among other members of the school community?
- What are the priorities in tackling bullying for next term, next year? Why?

## Does Bullying Exist in Your School?

### Asking Pupils

The main way of finding out if bullying exists in your school is to ask the pupils. This can be done in different ways. Each has advantages and disadvantages. Think through the purpose of finding out before deciding which method to use.

- If it is to convince sceptics on the staff about the existence of bullying, then a questionnaire to ALL pupils is more likely to convince than a few random observations.
- In contrast, if it is to get a better idea of particular kinds of bullying behaviour, and you are pretty sure when and where it happens, observation may be more appropriate.

*Whatever approach is adopted, you need time to devise a way of collecting information, analysing it, and writing it up. You also need to think through how you will use the information once collected. There is no point in collecting information for its own sake. All this does is raise false expectations.*

The advantages and disadvantages of different approaches are given below.

### 1. Developing a questionnaire

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- Gets staff thinking about what they want to find out, e.g. kinds of bullying, where/when it happens.
- Pupils can complete questionnaires anonymously.
- It is possible to survey all pupils and get a general picture of the nature and extent of bullying.

*This could be a really useful way of helping students take ownership of anti-bullying strategies within the school. By involving them in developing a questionnaire which includes the questions they have, and in their own words.*

## DISADVANTAGES

- Time is needed to develop a questionnaire and pilot it to ensure the questions make sense.
- Someone has to analyse the responses and write up a brief report.
- Written questionnaires are not useful for young children or those with reading or writing difficulties.

**Some of these difficulties could be overcome by involving students as mentioned overleaf. Students may be able to make very useful suggestions regarding a questionnaire for other students with literacy problems. Engaging middle school / high school pupils to help develop a pictorial questionnaire for young children for example, or by developing an interactive IT programme as a school project.**

## 2. Setting aside a time for each class or year group to discuss bullying

### ADVANTAGES

- Gets staff thinking about key aspects of bullying.
- It is less labour intensive than using a questionnaire.
- It does not disadvantage young children or poor readers or writers.

### DISADVANTAGES

- Since this is not confidential, discussion however sensitively handled may underestimate the incidence of bullying.
- By encouraging bravado discussion the incidence of bullying may be overstated
- Some staff will be better at handling this topic than others so there may be problems in getting a true picture across the school.
- Subjective reporting of discussion by staff is unavoidable, although a form with headings designed to aid reporting back would help.

## 3. Getting the staff to ask a year group or class to write about or draw their experience of bullying as victims, bullies or witnesses

### ADVANTAGES

- Response can be anonymous although handwriting is sometimes recognisable.
- An open approach lets pupils define what they mean by bullying, i.e. "a bully is somebody who..."
- It is open to all pupils.

### DISADVANTAGES

- Someone has to read responses/drawings and write a brief report.
- There is a risk of "imaginative" descriptions unless clear instructions are given.

#### **4. Observing areas of the school where there are opportunities for bullying such as playgrounds, lavatories, corridors**

##### **ADVANTAGES**

- Observation can be done in short bursts over a couple of days.
- It can be unobtrusive.
- Older pupils could be involved.
- Special Needs Assistants could be involved.
- Parents could help.

##### **DISADVANTAGES**

- Observers need to be clear what they are looking for: some forms of bullying are easier to spot than others. Training for observers will be needed.
- A recording sheet will need to be devised and tried out prior to use.
- Someone will need to read through the recording sheets and draw the information together.
- This is unlikely to give a general picture of the incidence of bullying – it will provide snapshots rather than a panorama.

#### **5. Asking staff and other adults**

Pupils are often the best source of information about bullying because they are being asked about their own school experience. Staff, parents and community groups can provide another perspective. It would be unwieldy to devise questionnaires for these groups. Instead think about the following:

- working with a small group to develop a questionnaire for pupils
- working with a small group on observation exercises such as outlined above
- arranging a meeting to talk through the school's policy

##### **ADVANTAGES**

- This signals a serious intention to tackle bullying.
- It also signals a wish to work with parents and others.

##### **DISADVANTAGES**

- The amount of time, needed for preparation.
- Doing this raises expectations and implies speedy action. Can you deliver?

**Taking a planned approach before beginning the exercise so that it is responsive not reactive can help school 'deliver'.**

## **Unsolicited Information**

Once bullying is brought out into the open, and discussed among the school community, bullying of pupils by a teacher or a member of the non-teaching staff may emerge. There are no fool-proof ways of tackling this.

We would stress the following:

- the school policy on bullying can extend into a discussion of expectations of how ALL members of the school community should behave towards each other.
- anticipate problems and consider potential solutions before being confronted with this issue
- work with staff to identify potential solutions, perhaps using a scenario to raise the issue
- failure to tackle the problem of adults bullying children signals that such bullying is acceptable.

## **Key Elements in Action Against Bullying**

The single most important thing that a school can do to combat bullying is to have an active policy to which all are committed. Each school will have its own ways of creating this condition. No one way will be appropriate for every school – but those things which are important apply equally to all schools. These things are:

- a school and classroom ethos which promotes respect for the individual
- a clear lead and active support by the headteacher
- the belief by the whole school that bullying is a serious issue that needs to be tackled
- a sense of ownership of the policy by key members of the school community, teachers, parents, non-teaching staff, pupils – not just the headteacher
- an open discussion about what counts as bullying
- an ethos that encourages victims and witnesses to speak up
- a readiness to treat incidents seriously however trivial they may seem at first glance
- a willingness to take action, and to be seen to take action, when bullying is reported

### **Adult role models of anti-bullying behaviour**

Anti-bullying role models:

- show respect for every child as an individual
- are aware of vulnerable children
- criticise the behaviour rather than the child
- avoid favouritism
- are seen to be fair
- avoid labelling
- have high expectations of pupils
- avoid reference to other members of the family ("just like your brother")
- never give pupils ammunition to use against each other.

How can all adults in schools be alerted to their importance as role models? One way is simply to remind them. Another is to use in-service opportunities to discuss a scenario featuring a desirable or undesirable role model. Teachers may be more aware than non-

teaching staff of the influence their own behaviour can have in providing appropriate role models for pupils.

Schools can make a difference. The very nature of schools as social institutions means that the risk of bullying is always there. Schools can't "do" bullying in one year and then forget about it. Like effective discipline it needs to be continually worked at. The pace of change in schools may prompt headteachers to say "not another initiative! We already have more than we can manage". Yet it is hard to imagine what could be more important.

Elsa and Smith (1998) in their study on the long-term effectiveness of anti-bullying work in primary schools suggested the importance of keeping "*the policy alive*", once the initial project involvement had finished. The Isle of Wight L.E.A. believes this to be very important in successful work against bullying in schools.

**No child deserves to be bullied. Pupils have the right to learn in an atmosphere free from fear and intimidation.**

## Ways of involving non-teaching staff

*Telling* all non-teaching staff about the key features of the school's policy is the bare minimum. More active involvement through training or membership of a working group on bullying is highly desirable. Schools are now beginning to address how training might be provided for non-teaching staff. What is feasible in one school may well be impractical in another. The table below summarises different kinds of involvement with a brief commentary.

Involvement	Comment
All non-teaching staff are given written information about the school's anti-bullying policy and the role they are expected to play.	This highlights expectations of involvement and stresses their value as members of the school community. Action is needed to make sure that the information is read and understood.
Written information is supplemented by a staff meeting at which the headteacher reinforces the anti-bullying message and discussion is encouraged.	The importance of the anti-bullying policy is highlighted through the head's involvement and there is a chance to clarify roles and expectations. Action is needed to encourage discussion and debate to ensure that contributions are valued and not put down or dismissed.
Non-teaching staff are actively involved with teaching staff in in-service education on bullying.	If it is done well, there is a better chance of understanding issues/roles. It enhances commitment if all staff are seen to be taking it seriously. However, more time and effort is needed to organise this and funding may also be needed.
Some non-teaching staff are recruited to the school working group to develop and monitor the anti-bullying policy.	This is a practical demonstration of their importance in tackling bullying. The group needs to have a clear sense of purpose and skilled leadership is vital to ensure that all have a real role to play.
Non-teaching staff are involved in exercises to map bullying danger spots and incidents.	These practical tasks give an immediate pay-off if they are followed up by action on reducing bullying.

It is easier to intend to involve non-teaching staff in training and policy development than to do it.

## What Adults in School Need to Know

As a minimum, it seems essential that non-teaching staff know:

- what counts as bullying behaviour (making clear that it is not only physical aggression, but includes threats, being excluded from groups, name calling...)
- what to do if they witness a bullying incident
- what to do if a child tells them that he or she is being bullied
- what to do if a parent approaches them about bullying

**The Isle of Wight LEA believes that schools should be committed to effective whole school approaches to bullying. It encourages schools to share with each other and the LEA those strategies they have found to be effective.**

## Appendices

The following appendix is courtesy of Birmingham City Council Education Service.

Extract from:

**"Guidance for Schools and other Education Services  
on Challenging Bullying and Racial Harassment"**

An additional Appendix regarding guidelines for reporting, recording and monitoring racial incidents will be circulated to all Island schools in due course.

## Appendix 2

# The Method of Shared Concern

by Anatol Pikas

Structure	Approximate Timing
1. Individual "chats" - bullies first - victim last	7 minutes
2. Follow up a week later	3 minutes
3. Half hour group meeting	30 minutes

## ***INDIVIDUAL "CHATS" METHOD***

### **Stage 1**

Establish eye contact, then:

"I hear you have been nasty to X. Tell me about it."

- let the pupil talk
- avoid closed questions
- don't question if they complain about the victim

### **Stage 2**

"So it sounds like X is having a bad time."

- as soon as they agree move on to Stage 3
- if they say "it's his/her fault", agree but still point out that they are having a bad time

### **Stage 3**

"O.K. I was wondering what you could do to help improve X's situation?"

- accept suggestions
- don't bargain or question
- don't discuss "how"
- if you have to offer suggestions, ask permission first

### **Stage 4**

"O.K. I'll see you next week to find out how you are getting on."