

Personalised Learning



Children and Young People's Services



Anti-Bullying Strategy & Guidance to Schools

2008 - 2010



This guidance replaces all previous versions which need to be destroyed



Contents

Anti-bullying Statement	..	..	..	..	..	Page 1
Introduction	..	..	..	..	..	Page 2
Definition of Bullying	..	..	..	..	..	Page 4
Responsibilities of Children & Young People’s Services	..					Page 5
Responsibilities of Schools and Governing Bodies	..					Page 6
Developing an Anti-Bullying Policy	..	..	..	..		Page 7
Anti-Bullying Strategies	..	..	..	..	..	Page 8

Appendices

Sample Anti-Bullying Policy	..	..	..	..	..	Page 9
Anti-Bullying Charter	..	..	..	..	..	Page 13
Useful contact details	..	..	..	..	..	Page 14

Anti-Bullying Statement

North Somerset Children & Young People's Services Directorate is committed to providing a safe environment in our schools where everybody is treated equally, free from racism, bullying or discrimination of any kind.

Bullying causes harm to those who are bullied, those who bully, and those who watch. Bullying is never acceptable. Our aim is to break the chain of bullying.

North Somerset is a member of the National Anti Bullying Alliance

The damaging effects of bullying are long term and far-reaching, impacting upon personal and social development as well as educational achievement.

As North Somerset further develops integrated children's services and addresses its obligations under *Every Child Matters*, there are increasing opportunities for all agencies to work together to support the following objectives: -

- To reduce the frequency of bullying
- To increase the likelihood that incidents are disclosed to responsible adults
- To intervene effectively when bullying happens

Analysis of Ofsted Inspectors' reports indicates that bullying is well managed in schools; however, children and young people continue to raise bullying as a concern. We are therefore committed to encouraging children and young people's participation in developing effective anti-bullying initiatives.

Introduction

The strategy will aid schools to build safe and supportive environments where:

all forms of bullying and harassment are minimised and positive relationships are fostered

The anti-bullying strategy is directly linked to a range of existing legislation and policies and to North Somerset Council's wider inclusion and equalities agenda. In particular:

- The Standards and Framework Act (1998) gives a statutory duty to all schools and educational services to have clear policies and procedures to combat bullying. These must be regularly monitored and reviewed and comply with the Human Rights Act (1998) and Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) The Children Act 2004 requires that Children's Services Authorities must work together with all providers for children in their area to ensure that children are kept safe and develop emotional and social well-being. The Education and Inspections Act 2006, says that head teachers can, to such an extent as is reasonable, regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off school site.
- DCSF guidance *Safe to learn: Embedding anti bullying work in schools, including Cyberbullying, Homophobic bullying, and Bullying involving children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.*
- North Somerset Council's Race Equality Scheme which should underpin other policies and be committed to tackling harassment on any grounds e.g. racial, sexual, homophobic or related to special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- North Somerset Council's Community Strategy
- North Somerset Council's Corporate Plan 'Aiming for Excellence'
- North Somerset Council's Behaviour Support Improvement Plan
- North Somerset Council's Inclusion Strategy
- North Somerset Council's School Attendance Matters
- North Somerset Council's Integrated Youth Support Strategy
- North Somerset Council's Youth Justice Plan
- NHS and DCSF Guidance on Healthy Schools
- North Somerset Local Area Agreement

Additional information on legislation relating to bullying can be found on DCSF website www.DCSF.org

1. *For the purpose of this document, the term 'schools' includes the following provision: primary, secondary, special and pupil referral units*
2. *Although this document relates to guidance for schools, it is anticipated that the vision and aims will be shared across Children and Young People's Services in due course, including the Youth Service and providers of further education.*

Definition of Bullying

There are many definitions of bullying, but all have three common factors:

- It is deliberately hurtful
- It is repeated over time
- There is an imbalance of power

Bullying can take a number of forms:

Physical:	pushing, hitting, kicking etc
Verbal:	name-calling, taunting, teasing, intimidating, humiliating, gossiping
Silent:	isolation, rude gestures, exclusion from activities
Cyberbullying:	malicious use of email, social chatrooms, blogs, mobile phones

Many behaviours, which in the school context, are called bullying, may be defined in law as threatening behaviour, criminal damage, theft, assault, sexual, racial or homophobic harassment. It is the right of all children and young people and parents to report such incidents to the police.

Bullying may not be restricted to incidents between children and young people. Accusations of bullying between and towards adults may also be made and acknowledgement of this should be made in school policies.

Teachers are particularly vulnerable to being victims of cyberbullying. They need to take steps to protect themselves, by carefully limiting access to their personal equipment. For more information visit Teacher Support Network www.teachersupport.info

Responsibilities of Children & Young People's Services

North Somerset Council recognises and acknowledges existing good practice in schools. This policy guidance is intended to build on this good practice and to aid schools in reviewing their current policies in line with current legislative requirements and recommendations.

Therefore, this policy guidance encourages all schools to promote their anti-bullying approaches through their policies, strategies, monitoring and reviewing procedures.

North Somerset Council will support schools by:

- Raising awareness of the issues of bullying in schools
- Ensuring that all schools take necessary steps to address the issue of bullying, including the development and implementation of whole school policy
- Supporting schools to monitor and follow up incidents of bullying and harassment
- Disseminating good practice
- Promoting respect for others
- Protecting pupils rights to be safe from bullying
- Ensuring that the needs of both those who are bullies and those who bully are addressed

To achieve this, North Somerset Council will:

- Publicise this document widely as support to the Behaviour Support Improvement Plan and ensure its contents are made known to all schools and governing bodies and other departments within the Authority
- Raise awareness and sensitivity to the issues of bullying and the appropriate methods for dealing with it, by providing training to staff and governors.
- Provide schools with information on how to access guidance and support on anti-bullying policies and strategies.
- Oversee the monitoring of incidents of bullying and harassment in schools
- Liaise and consult with relevant voluntary bodies and parent forums

Responsibilities of Schools and Governing Bodies

All members of the school community should be able to demonstrate their commitment to combating bullying through their policies, practices and management processes. Where schools are unable to demonstrate their commitment they might find themselves open to challenge from legal procedures.

Governors and Headteachers have a central role in ensuring that their school fulfils its legal obligations and that anti-bullying procedures are established and implemented in school.

Governors and Headteachers should ensure that:

- the school's anti-bullying policy is made known to all staff, pupils, parents and carers and is reviewed regularly
- the policy is developed and reviewed in consultation with all members of the school community, including children and young people.
- the explicit expectations in the policy are observed by all adults working in the school
- there is an acceptable use policy for mobile phones and the internet and all members of the school community are aware of its content
- procedures are established to ensure all incidents of bullying are dealt with fairly and consistently
- all school staff have the opportunity to receive training on appropriate methods for dealing with incidents of bullying and harassment
- there is sufficient and suitable curriculum coverage of the issues around bullying for example through Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) and Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE)
- incidents of bullying and harassment are monitored and the effectiveness of interventions recorded, using appropriate reporting systems
- the ethos of the school ensures that all children and young people feel safe and confident that if they report an incident to an adult, it will not be ignored
- other support agencies are involved where appropriate, for example, Education Welfare Service, Education Support Service, Educational Psychology Service, Special Educational Needs Team and Equality and Diversity Team
- the whole school community is aware of its need to respond to incidents of bullying that take place off site

Developing an Anti Bullying Policy

All anti-bullying approaches should be consistent and embedded within a whole school anti-bullying policy. The policy must be in line with other related school policies especially Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) Special Educational Needs (SEN), Attendance and Equality and Diversity.

In September 2007 the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) published new guidance under the title; Safe to learn: Embedding anti bullying work in schools. There are supporting publications which include guidance under the titles of Homophobic bullying, Cyber-bullying and Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. All publications are free and available from www.teachernet.gov.uk (follow strand for behaviour and attendance). These publications replace the earlier Don't Suffer in Silence.

Anti bullying policies will vary according to the ethos and pastoral organisation of the school. However, for a policy to be effective and comprehensive, the Anti Bullying Alliance recommends the following be included:

- Values and Ethos
- Aims and objectives
- Definition of bullying
- Roles and named person
- Effective action (preventative interventions and effective response)
- Consultation and Distribution
- Links to other policies
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Anti-Bullying Strategies

- Displaying the school's anti-bullying statement or charter
- Promoting a positive and inclusive whole school ethos
- Using SEAL, (Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning) to foster whole school approaches to behaviour
- Displaying HELPLINES and their contact numbers (e.g. Childline, Kidscape)
- Facilitating regular circle time with opportunities to develop emotional literacy and providing a safe environment to allow pupils to share concerns
- Displaying poster campaigns
- Providing a Bully/Worry Box where pupils can leave notes of incidents of bullying, if they feel unable to tell someone directly
- Raising self esteem for all pupils especially those involved in bullying
- Supervising vulnerable areas effectively
- Promoting peer support schemes
- Encouraging appropriate and effective staff training
- Developing playgrounds with opportunities for constructive play opportunities
- Involving those who are bullied in the decision making process when dealing with incidents
- Encouraging children and young people to devise appropriate anti-bullying strategies and to contribute to policy
- Promoting and contributing towards national anti-bullying week
- Providing behaviour modification programmes for students involved in bullying behaviours
- Facilitating restorative justice

APPENDICES

SAMPLE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Values and Ethos

Reference should be made to the school ethos/Mission Statement with a clear intention to take bullying seriously and manage it effectively. It should acknowledge that pupils are bullied for a variety of reasons, including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers or children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist or sexual bullying

Bullying and random prejudicial behaviour must be assertively confronted at all times and the leadership must make it clear that, whilst shared values are difficult to achieve, resulting injurious language and behaviour are not tolerated under any circumstances.

Aims and Objectives

The policy should make clear schools' intentions to:

- reduce the frequency of bullying incidents
- increase the likelihood that incidents are disclosed to responsible adults
- intervene effectively when bullying happens
- promote positive pro-social behaviours and attitudes
- improve attendance
- fulfil the five aims of the 'Every Child Matters' framework

Definition of Bullying

A definition of bullying should include that it:

- is behaviour that causes emotional or physical harm to a target or group
- is repeated over time
- can include attitudes of prejudice
- enacts an imbalance of power between those involved

Reference should also be made to new methods of communicating bullying resulting from new technologies: mobile phone texting/imaging, social chatrooms and networking sites.

The definition offered on the Anti Bullying Alliance website is:

“Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms, making it extremely difficult to define. Children, young people and adults can instigate bullying. The nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops.

Bullying is harmful to all involved, not just the bullied, and can lead to self-doubt, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, self-harm and sometimes even suicide. Bullying generally fits into one of two categories: emotionally or physically harmful behaviour. This includes:

name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, text messaging, emailing, gossiping, excluding people from groups; and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

Definitions are different and individuals have different experiences; however from the accounts we have heard from children and young people we consider bullying to be:

- *repetitive, wilful or persistent*
- *intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or a group*
- *an imbalance of power leaving the victim feeling defenceless”*

The Government defines bullying in Safe to learn as: *Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.*

Bullying includes: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, inappropriate text messaging and emailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups, and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others.

Roles and Named Person

The policy should name a co-ordinator preferably a member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for anti bullying.

Effective Action

The policy should include strategic interventions to:

- reduce the frequency of bullying
- ensure effective responses to reported or observed incidents

Preventative Interventions

The policy should make reference to a range of planned initiatives to promote:

- emotional safety
- physical safety
- dignity and respect
- social inclusion
- enjoyment
- achievement
- positive involvement for all
- good management of the physical environment
- staff and peer support structures
- clear and safe ways to report incidents

Effective Response

The policy should clearly describe the agreed responses to bullying incidents, so that everyone is clear what action will be taken and a consistent approach is maintained.

The policy should include:

- short descriptions of the methods used
- sources of information

With intended outcomes stated as:

- keeping potential target safe from bullying
- changing the behaviour of potential bullies to promote pro-social relationships

Using a range of strategies that includes:

- support through Personal Social, and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)
- mediation
- peer support
- advocacy
- pastoral support

Making clear reference to:

- the importance of training for anti-bullying leader and staff

- the methods of recording and monitoring incidents of bullying
- establishing the limits of responsibility and duty of care with regard to off site behaviour

Consultation and Distribution

The policy must make clear:

- how it will be made regularly available to all members of the school community including pupils, parents and carers, staff and governors
- who will be consulted
- whether different versions will be available e.g. for age/literacy levels/languages
- when it will be reviewed

Links to Other Policies

The policy must make clear reference to other school policies/documents, which overlap e.g. Safeguarding/Child Protection, Behaviour and Attendance, Human Rights, Equality and Diversity, Health and Well-being etc. with hyperlinks to national guidance and support sites.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy needs to state how its effectiveness will be measured, by identifying:

- How incidents of bullying will be recorded
- What recording methods will be used
- How incidents will be monitored
- How data will be used to influence change
- What action will be taken as a result of monitoring
- How all members of the school community will be encouraged to report bullying (Including pupils, parents and carers and staff) e.g. display of charter and helplines/worry boxes/parent/pupil leaflets
- How/when/should police involvement be necessary
- Whether the action taken resulted in improvement in behaviour

Bullying - A Charter for Action

Name of school

We are working with staff, pupils and parents to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated.

Our school community

- ✓ Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying **policy** on a regular basis.
- ✓ Supports **staff** to identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- ✓ Ensures that **pupils** are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- ✓ Reports back quickly to **parents/carers** regarding their concerns on bullying.
- ✓ Seeks to learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere and utilises the support of the **LEA and relevant statutory/ voluntary organisations** when appropriate.

_____ Chair - Governors

_____ Headteacher

_____ Representative of pupils

_____ Date

Department for
education and skills
Leading opportunities, raising potential, achieving excellence



NASUWT

PAT



North Somerset Council Contact Details

Tel No. 01275 888888

Website. www.n-somerset.gov.uk

Additional Useful Contact Details

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	..	..	..	..	0808 800 5793
Anti-Bullying Alliance	..	..	..	..	01179 375 500
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	..	..	..	..	0845 456 7000
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	..	..	..	....	0800 800 500
Childline	..	..	..	..	0800 11 11
Children's Legal Centre	..	..	..	..	0845 120 2948
EACH	..	..	..	..	0808 100 0143
Kidscape	..	..	..	..	0207 730 3300
Mediation UK	..	..	..	..	01773 822 222
Parentline Plus	..	..	..	..	0808 800 2222

Websites: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

www.teachernet.gov.uk/bullying