



Humshaugh Church of England Aided First School

Adopted 2007

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Introduction

“An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of every young person matter.....

***The most effective schools do not take educational inclusion for granted.....
They identify any pupils who may be missing out They take practical steps to meet pupils’ needs effectively and they promote tolerance and understanding in a diverse society”***

(OFSTED)

Whilst this quotation is taken from a general statement about educational inclusion, what is says is at the heart of any strategy to tackle bullying. Bullying by its very nature excludes pupils from their full educational entitlement and is therefore unacceptable in any form. Young people themselves highlight bullying as a matter of significant importance to them, including bullying by adults as well as by other young people. All schools should aspire to being inclusive and an anti-bullying strategy should be built upon an overall inclusive ethos which should underpin all that the school sets out to achieve.

All schools must by law have a policy to prevent all forms of bullying. This document is intended to support schools and other settings in formulating and implementing their policies. It will be followed up by further guidance, including references to other documents and sources of support and by a programme of support and training.

In drawing up these guidelines, Northumberland County Council has taken into consideration guidelines and recommendations from the DfES and a range of voluntary organisations working in this field.

This document also takes into account duties and responsibilities that arise from the

Human Rights Act 2000.

Every Child Matters (DfES 2004) identifies the role of organisations in safeguarding children and young people.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

Northumberland County Council seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where:

- **Children and young people can achieve their potential, making full use of the opportunities available to them**
- **Children and young people involved have the right to have themselves and their property treated with respect and to be free from intimidation.**

The County Council seeks to protect these basic human rights by ensuring that those acting on their behalf:

- **Are proactive in setting up a range of preventative measures.**
- **Actively listen to children, young people and where appropriate their parents or carers.**

EXPECTATIONS

Northumberland County Council expects that, in line with DfES recommendations and the Human Rights Act 2000, schools and other organisations will provide an environment to combat bullying effectively.

This is exemplified by:

- A strong ethos which promotes tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity
- Positive leadership on how to recognise and deal with bullying within the overall policy on attitudes and behaviour
- A planned approach to the issue of bullying, so that it is discussed openly and regularly in a context which promotes self-esteem and confident relationships
- Regular consultation with children and young people to find out what bullying occurs, when, where and by whom
- Safe areas or quiet rooms for children and young people at times when they feel particularly vulnerable
- Identifying ways of breaking down age group stratification, for example through planned and managed buddy systems, mixed age groups and out of school clubs run by older young people (who have had appropriate training) for other young people.
- Identifying Independent listeners including older pupils and adults other than school staff to whom those who are being bullied may turn.
- The involvement of children and young people in procedures dealing with instances of bullying through circles of friends, peer mediation and other schemes.
- Provision for follow up of those who are bullied and those who bully
- A commitment to the development of a multi agency approach that might help reduce bullying behaviour
- An appropriate mechanism for dealing with bullying to include:

- *The immediate provision of a place of safety for children and young people who have reported an incident of bullying*
- *The investigation of incidents, clearly stating what action will be taken as part of that investigation*
- *The recording of incidents and the subsequent action taken*
- *The guarantee of confidentiality within clearly defined boundaries*
- *The involvement of parents and other organisations*
- *Monitoring and evaluation of the actions taken*

Schools and other organisations will have to give careful consideration to how their anti-bullying policy links with all other relevant policies. In particular issues of frequency and severity need to be taken into account when deciding whether or not a particular case of bullying should be reported within the Child Protection procedures.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Northumberland County Council and the schools and organisations working on its behalf with children and young people should state categorically that bullying is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether committed by young people or by staff.

Those drawing up individual, institutional or organisational policies should:-

1. Involve children, young people and adults in the development of the policy and putting it into practice
2. Reflect the County's statement of principle in their own anti-bullying policy or adopt the County Council policy
3. Produce a policy document which is communicated to and available for all those who are involved with the organisation
4. Identify how they will put the policy into practice
5. Have an identified person who will have responsibility for the dissemination, implementation and monitoring of the policy so that all are aware of the policy and its implications
6. Make regular (we would suggest at least annually) reviews of the policy and ensure that the review informs future plans
7. Be proactive in recording, monitoring, analysing and acting upon incidents. Monitoring and analysing may reveal racist or homophobic bullying, in which case further measures will need to take place
8. Identify and provide appropriate training for children, young people and adults in all aspects of anti-bullying work
9. Provide a safe, listening environment in which children, young people and adults feel free to discuss and report bullying issues.

THE NATURE OF BULLYING

Bullying may be defined as the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It is repeated over a period of time on those who feel powerless to resist with the intention of causing distress.

Bullying should always be taken seriously. All bullying is unacceptable.

Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such.

• **Bullying** is deliberately hurtful. It typically has seven elements:-

1. *an initial desire to hurt*
2. *the desire is expressed in action*
3. *someone is hurt either physically or emotionally*
4. *there is an imbalance of power*
5. *it is without justification*
6. *it is typically repeated*
7. *there is evident enjoyment by those who bully*

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness, such as in name calling or stem from institutionalised attitudes, for example in relation to gender or race. That does not make it any less unacceptable.

Bullying can typically take three forms

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| 1. | Physical bullying | <i>hitting, kicking, taking belongings</i> |
| 2. | Verbal bullying | <i>name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks</i> |
| 3. | Indirect bullying | <i>spreading nasty stories, exclusion from social groups.</i> |

Name calling is the most common direct form. This may be because of individual characteristics. However, pupils can be called names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation or some form of disability.

The use of mobile phones to text insulting, obscene or threatening messages is both verbal and indirect bullying. The use of phones, including camera phones to harass or transmit derogatory text messages and or photographs must also be viewed as bullying.

Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied.

BULLYING BY RACE, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR DISABILITY

1. Racist Bullying

Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 MacPherson report defines racist bullying as “any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person” A child or young person may be targeted for representing a group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry
- Physical aggression or threats
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation’s premises
- Racist inciting of others
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs

- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play

For further information and guidance consult the Northumberland County Council anti-racism policy

2. Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material
- Graffiti with sexual content

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

Sexual Orientation

Pupils do not have to be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough. (In a survey 82% of teachers in 300 secondary schools in London were aware of verbal incidents. Only 6% of these schools referred to this type of bullying within their policy).

Factors hindering schools in challenging homophobic bullying include staff inexperience and parental disapproval.

For further information and guidance consult the DfES publication on homophobic bullying "Stand Up for Us"

3. Disabilities

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

RECOGNISING BULLYING

A recent survey showed that bullying in schools is widespread. Although bullying can occur on journeys to and from school, most takes place in school. Research shows that 75% of bullying in primary schools takes place in the playground. In secondary schools it is also most likely outdoors but other hotspots are classrooms, corridors and toilets, especially when supervision is minimal.

Both boys and girls bully and can bully as individuals or as members of a group. Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background. Adult bullying of children also occurs and is equally unacceptable.

Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved. The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. Research evidence has shown that those who bully are more likely to engage in anti-social activities and have a greater prevalence of poor mental health.

A child or young person could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such.

Those who bully may show aggression through for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through for example low self esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged.

Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child or young person can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation
- Reduced self esteem and self worth
- Poor academic performance
- Exclusion from normal social experience
- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide
- Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:
 - Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities
 - Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building
 - Fear of walking to school or of using public transport
 - Underachievement
 - Books or clothes destroyed
 - Possessions and money going missing
 - Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
 - Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and / or aggressive
 - Stammering
 - Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions
 - A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns
 - A marked change in well established patterns of behaviour

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help.

Organisations that tolerate bullying are less effective; morale is lower and absenteeism is more frequent.

POLICY GUIDELINES

Head Teachers must by law have a policy to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. This policy must comply with the Human Rights Act 2000.

It is the responsibility of all staff to understand their establishment's anti-bullying policy and to support its implementation through a robust strategy. The systems and procedures of the organisation must reflect the policy. There must be effective monitoring, recording and analysing of the frequency and nature of bullying within the organisation. A policy will only be effective if everyone has discussed and understood the problem of bullying and reached agreement on what is good practice.

The following actions will ensure that the anti-bullying policy is successfully implemented:-

1. Name a member of staff to be responsible for the anti-bullying strategy
2. Consult appropriate children, young people and adults in the development of the strategy
3. Review and reflect on the policy and its effectiveness regularly
4. Specify those types of behaviours that are considered to be bullying and therefore unacceptable
5. Make explicit reference to bullying by race, gender, sexual orientation or disability
6. Keep children, young people and adults informed of the developments within the strategy through a variety of means
7. Raise awareness of the effects of bullying on the victim
8. Encourage peer support and mediation
9. Provide support to those being bullied and to those alleged to be bullies
10. Provide a means for concerns to be voiced anonymously
11. Access staff training on bullying
12. Ensure that there is adequate supervision in identified high risk areas
13. Identify hot spots in the physical environment and make the necessary changes
14. Use a wide range of intervention methods within the strategy

MONITORING THE ANTI BULLYING POLICY AND STRATEGY

Monitoring is essential to help assess progress and evaluate the impact of the anti-bullying policy. The results will inform planning so that action can be targeted.

Surveys can uncover a number of issues including:

- *The frequency of the bullying*
- *The type of bullying*
- *Who young people tell*
- *Any actions taken*
- *Who took action?*
- *If young people bully others once they have been bullied*

Issues arising from such surveys should steer further development of the anti-bullying strategy.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Northumberland County Council recommends that schools and other organisations go through the following stages in establishing a policy.

Stage 1 - Awareness raising and consultation

A policy will only be effective if everyone has discussed and understood the problem and agreed on good and bad practice.

Links with other relevant policies and guidelines – behaviour policy, child protection, health and safety, confidentiality.

Awareness raising helps people understand the problem and agree a definition of bullying. It gives shared understanding and a shared language.

Planned consultation lets everyone say what they think and feel and should include children and young people, all school staff, parents/ carers and governors. Wherever possible the wider community should be involved, for example police and community nurses.

Stage 2 – Implementation

Senior management should give a clear and consistent lead.

The policy should be promoted at every opportunity. In schools this could be in assemblies and tutorials. PSHE, Citizenship, literature, history or geography can provide curriculum opportunities to promote the policy. A launch event gives an effective means of getting the policy into practice.

It is essential that those new to the organisation be made aware of the policy e.g. new pupils, new staff, and new parents and new governors.

Direct action reinforces the message that bullying is unacceptable.

Damage, injury and theft demand a serious and rapid response.

Stage 3 – Monitoring

The key member of staff should monitor the implementation of the policy at regular intervals and record any action taken.

Monitoring identifies progress and enables follow up, so showing where the policy is really effective. The policy should make clear under what circumstances records should be used for monitoring, how long the records should be kept and who will have access to them.

Stage 4 – Evaluation

At least once every school year Governors should review and update the policy to identify specific actions that have been or need to be taken. Using data from monitoring can inform and be used to update the policy and practice. A termly report to governors, parents and staff will give the policy high profile. After one year following this procedure schools typically find that one or more of the following happens:

- *Staff are more vigilant and responsive to bullying*
- *Ultimately fewer young people report being bullied or that they bully*
- *More pupils say they would not join in bullying someone else*
- *More pupils would tell a member of staff if they were being bullied*

In preparing an anti-bullying policy document for your school or organisation it is expected that you will include each of the following sections.

Policy Content

Statement of principle – a positive statement of ethos and the kind of school or organisation this is, including the kind of behaviour that is promoted.

Aims – these should reflect the recent document ‘ Every Child Matters’ in that children and young people have the right to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve and make a positive contribution all without fear of intimidation.

Consultation process – who is consulted in developing the policy, when consultation takes place and the methods used

Definition and identification of bullying – the nature of bullying by race, gender etc.

Strategies and Procedures for dealing with bullying

Preventative Work – including reference to other policies, to training etc.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING ON SCHOOL PREMISES

The list below is a summary of the recommendations by the DfES in the document “Bullying – Don’t Suffer in Silence.”

1. Refer to all types of bullying (sexual, racial, disability etc) explicitly within the anti-bullying policy so that all know that discrimination is wrong and will be acted upon
2. Audit the extent and nature of the problem
3. Use separate incident books to record the different types of reported bullying incidents
4. Regularly review and reinforce the school’s approach to anti-bullying at INSET days
5. Offer confidentiality and appropriate advice to lesbian, gay and bi-sexual pupils
6. Develop an understanding of gender relations and suitable strategies through staff training
7. Recognise and consistently challenge sexual, racist and homophobic content within verbal abuse
8. Explore children’s and young people’s understanding of their use of homophobic language – do they understand it?
9. Explore sexism and sexual bullying through the curriculum
10. Use single sex groupings to explore sensitive issues
11. Ensure that the environment is well supervised
12. Explore issues of difference and diversity
13. Children and young people should be listened to carefully and opportunities should be made available for them to express their views and opinions
14. Explore multi-agency working to support the implementation of the anti-bullying policy
15. Involve parents and the wider community in the decision of what action will be taken
16. Use peer mediation to resolve conflict
17. Use theatre in education to raise awareness and seek solutions

18. Explore and rejoice in differences and diversity through a wide range of events in and out of the curriculum
19. Use role play and assertiveness training
20. Deal promptly with incidents
21. Ensure a calm and consistent approach from staff
22. Ensure the immediate safety and well being of those being bullied

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

A head teacher's duty of care to prevent bullying is applied only within the precincts of the school.

However, a good deal of bullying takes place outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school.

This bullying may involve young people from the school, young people from other schools or young people not at school at all.

It is therefore essential that an anti-bullying policy encourages all young people to tell.

Transparent responsibility will ensure that everyone, including professionals working in school, knows who the named person is and what procedures and processes are in place.

It is therefore essential that protocols be established with the outside agencies supporting young people in school

Where a pupil reports bullying off the school premises, it may be appropriate to:

- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses;
- Talk to the headteachers of other schools, where pupils from these schools are bullying off the premises;
- Plan safe routes to school with the pupils;
- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside school premises;
- Talk to the local police about specific problem groups and problem areas.