NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 JANUARY 2007

Anti-Bullying Measures and the Supervision of Young People at Vulnerable Times During School

Report by the Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service

1.0   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To inform Members of the progress made by the Local Authority in ensuring that North Yorkshire's children and young people are educated in safe and caring environments.

1.2   To do all that we can as a Local Authority to minimise the issue of bullying.

1.3   To recognise that bullying can affect behavioural, social, emotional and physical aspects of learning for individuals and communities.

1.4   To ensure that all statutory duties are met.

2.0   BACKGROUND

2.1   All schools and settings have an active Anti-Bullying Policy in place. These are monitored by the Education Service and Ofsted.

2.2   Training packages are provided to all schools (Rowantree) to support anti-bullying initiatives. The Local Authority also provides generic training available to all schools.

2.3   Individual schools and settings can access tailor made training programmes to support anti-bullying. Examples of these include The 'Lunch Pack' materials designed specifically to support lunchtime supervisors. These courses have also been offered generically. Not all schools currently access this support. There could be a more pro-active response.

2.4   Bullying occurs more frequently at the less structured times. This is when pupils are most vulnerable. It is in everyone's interest to ensure support, safety and stability at all times. The recognition of this at the recruitment of all staff (significantly non-teaching) is fundamental here. However some schools/settings find securing non-teachers availability to receive training problematic.

3.0 REPORTING INCIDENCES OF BULLYING

3.1 North Yorkshire has a dedicated anti-bullying website (**www.northyorks.gov.uk/antibullying**) and dedicated telephone line (01609 538960). There is also a dedicated e-mail in the process of development.

Last year 219 incidents of bullying were recorded (86,000 population). We are currently undertaking a full survey of pupils' perceptions in secondary schools. This will be followed by a special school and primary survey. This questionnaire significantly includes a section on pupil and young people's perceptions at vulnerable times (significantly breaks and lunchtimes)

3.2 All schools are encouraged to record instances of bullying in incident record books. However, there is currently no national requirement to collate this (other than race-related incidents). Statistical neighbour comparators are therefore not available.

4.0 GOOD PRACTICE

4.1 One of the keys to North Yorkshire's anti-bullying strategies is the curriculum approach, Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) this importantly enables pupils to reflect upon bullying and develop values such as care, co-operation, honesty and respect for others.

4.2 Currently the Local Authorities strategies to reduce bullying include guidelines/audit for schools, pupils and carers. Governor training, community link work, support for specific victims and perpetrators. Close links with CAMHS, the creation of safe areas, links with voluntary services (i.e. ChildLine) and importantly the audits via questionnaire to all schools to give children and young people a voice. We work in close partnerships with many other agencies in order to jointly reduce bullying.

4.3 During this year's Anti-Bullying week, the Chairman of the Commons Select Committee on Education (Barry Sheerman MP) visited North Yorkshire to view our good practice. He saw that we are determined to do everything within our power to reduce bullying. We recognise that bullying can arise almost anywhere and that one instance of bullying is one too many. It was very encouraging to have our efforts recognised by this visit.

5.0 GUIDANCE

5.1 Our current Local Guidance is enclosed (Enclosure 1). National guidance is being updated and should be available by the end of March 2007.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That progress in overall delivery is noted.

Cynthia Welbourn
Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service

Report prepared by Nigel Ogley, Head of Behaviour Support Service

NO/KER/JR
18 December 2006

North Yorkshire County Council

Behaviour & Attendance Strategy:
Anti-bullying

Guidelines and self evaluation framework for schools

Excellence for all

www.northyorks.gov.uk/antibullying

Contents

Anti-bullying

Bullying is generally taken to mean any sort of systematic physical or psychological intimidation by those in a position of power over those who are unable to defend themselves. It implies a wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone, with the intention of causing distress. It can include personal, sexual or racial harassment.

Bullying affects:

♦ the victims who often already suffer from a poor self image;

♦ the child who bullies for whom such behaviour may lead to other forms of anti-social activity;

♦ the bystanders who may be frightened as a result of the bullying activities;

♦ the staff who may be seen as ineffective in dealing with such behaviour;

♦ the ethos and the way a school functions.

Bullying used to be seen as part of the inevitable struggle of "growing up". Teachers often under-estimate the amount of bullying which takes place in their schools because:

♦ bullying is a secretive activity;

♦ victims are reluctant to "tell", they feel ashamed that they are bullied, they often do not feel that the teacher can stop it and are afraid for any retaliation by the bully;

♦ there is often no general encouragement for pupils to tell on the bullies.

Social Inclusion: Pupil Support Circular 10/99 makes the following recommendations:

♦ Dealing with 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

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.

♦ Dealing with racial and sexual harassment

As with bullying, schools' behaviour policies need to cover racial and sexual harassment. Racial harassment does not happen only in schools with large ethnic minority populations.

All schools' behaviour policies must make clear that racial harassment will not be tolerated and say how staff and pupils should deal with it. The school should record all racial incidents, and parents and governors should be informed of such incidents and the action taken to deal with them. Governing Bodies should inform LEAs annually of the pattern and frequency of any incidents. Pupils who have suffered racial harassment, at or outside school, may need support.

Sexual harassment is most often carried out by boys against girls. Personal Social and Health Education can help to foster appropriate and responsible sexual behaviour and deter offensive behaviour.

← **More information**

www.northyorks. gov.uk/ antibullying

'Bullying: Don't suffer in silence—an anti-bullying pack for schools DfES 2002 (revised)

'Bullying —A Charter for Action' DfES 2004

'Preparing young people for adult life: a report by the National Advisory Group on Personal Social and Health Education', DfES 1999.

Most research into bullying has been carried out in Scandinavian countries, but quite recently there has been an upsurge of interest in this country which has led to a number of studies into the incidents and nature of bullying. (References in Annex C).

Certain common themes emerged from the research which has been undertaken into bullying:

♦ About 1 in 4 children are involved in bullying either as children who bully or victims. Many more children witness bullying and this can be a worry to them.

♦ Bullying often takes place over an extended period.

♦ On questionnaires and in interview boys report to be bullied twice as often as girls. Boys are mainly bullied by boys, girls are bullied by both boys and girls.

♦ Whilst bullying takes place in significant amounts on the way to and from school the majority of bullying incidents occur during school time, both in and outside the classroom.

♦ Boys who bully usually focus on physical aggression and violence, often aimed at establishing dominance within the group, whilst girls often use verbal techniques such as spreading rumours and often aiming at isolating the victim from the group. However, both boys and girls use physical as well as psychological bullying.

♦ Most bullying happens in the same class and year group, or by older children.

♦ Bullying takes place at times when supervision is low or non-existent. School break-times are often a major occasion for bullying and a time of great anxiety for many children. The toilet areas are also often areas where bullying occurs.

♦ Research indicates that bullying is a very complex issue in which factors of home background, personality, social experiences, and school approaches are all inter-related:

♦ Although some can be of higher ability most victims are generally under-achieving and unpopular in school. They are less able to relate to their peers and have low self-esteem. They are mostly passive, but a small minority actively provoke bullying through their lack of inter-personal skills. This latter group is more likely to report bullying to their teachers.

♦ Children who bully are also often below average in their attainments but more popular than victims. They enjoy being physically and verbally aggressive and may, often through experiences at home, conceive of this as an acceptable way to achieve their objectives. One in five children who bully can be classed as "anxious children" who are suffering major educational difficulties.

- There is a small group who are both victims and children who bully. These children are the most unpopular, both for other pupils and for staff.

- Bullying can occur in any school regardless of size, gender or socio-economic background.

- Physical characteristics, including ethnic origin are often taken as a pretext for bullying. However, such characteristics per se do not necessarily lead to being bullied.

- A whole school approach, which is initiated by the staff and which tackles bullying at a variety of levels has been shown to have a significant effect in lowering the incidence of bullying in schools. Approaches to tackle bullying should include whole school, class and individual pupil work.

Strategies to Reduce Bullying

Whilst much can be done by individual teachers to alleviate the problem for individual pupils, the only effective way to reduce bullying throughout the school on a permanent basis is a **whole school approach**. In order to achieve this there are a number of major factors to be taken into account.

♦ Anti-Bullying should be included within a whole school behaviour policy but it must be tackled in very specific ways.

♦ Tackling the problem of bullying is the responsibility of all those in the school, as well as those connected with it. This includes the children who bully, the victims, the non-bullied pupils, the teaching and ancillary staff, as well as the governors, parents and the support agencies.

♦ The problem of bullying should be owned by everyone concerned. This means that the first step in any attempt to reduce bullying is for everyone to be convinced that there is indeed a problem to be tackled.

♦ A network of good communication is essential. This needs to be considered as a specific issue if subsequent intervention is to be successful.

♦ Ensure good communication between all groups involved. The non-bullied group of pupils could be a particularly powerful ally in the prevention of bullying. Parents are very willing to help the school on specific projects but are sometimes reluctant to offer assistance for fear of interfering. Support agencies are frequently able to provide the individual pupil's as well as the whole community perspective. A working group including people at different levels and with different perspectives can be very effective.

♦ It is important to evaluate any anti-bullying work undertaken. A survey into bullying both raises awareness, provides details on the incidents and can serve as a baseline for later evaluation. Individual interviews with selected pupils and staff are also very valuable.

♦ Maintenance of the anti-bullying policy is of major importance. A whole school approach to anti-bullying should be part of an on-going consideration and be subject to reviews as to its efficiency. Frequently staff (especially senior staff) should stress to the school how unacceptable bullying is and the negative effect it has on all of us, and how everything possible must be done to stop bullying and encourage positive relationships.

(See also Annex B)

It is important to have a set of guidelines available for staff, pupils and parents. The following guidelines are based on recent research publications, including those set out in Annex C.

♦   Watch for early signs of distress in pupils - deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, often being late for lessons and late for school, low self-esteem, bruises and cuts, avoidance of school. All of the above may be symptomatic of other problems but may be early signs of bullying.

♦   Be available and willing to listen. Treat the information seriously.

♦   Record each incident precisely and be seen to do this.

♦   Offer the victim immediate support and help by putting the school's procedures into operation. Inform the parents of both the victim and the child who is doing the bullying where appropriate.

♦   Avoid the "bullying" model when applying sanctions. Do not bully the child who is bullying. Try to negotiate an agreed form of atonement which is acceptable to both the victim and the bully.

♦   Ensure that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled at break, lunch-time, between lessons and at the end of the day.

- All observed incidents of bullying must be stopped immediately. They must then be dealt with, either immediately or at a later more appropriate time.

- Use all the pupils as a positive resource in encountering bullying. Set up discussion groups with pupils and lessons about bullying.

- Help the child who is bullying to become aware that he/her actions are considered to be bullying and that these are hurtful to the victim.

- Ascertain wherever possible the reasons why she/he bullies others and help the child who is bullying resolve his/her problems.

- Break up groups of children who bully by not allowing them to play, sit, eat, etc., together.

- Bullying is always wrong - a victim of bullying must not be made to feel guilty because she/he is bullied. The victim, must, however, be made aware that some behaviour can easily be used as an excuse for bullying.

- If bullying is happening to children on the way home, inform the parents of this, keep the child who is bullying at school until everyone has left. Do not allow the children who are bullying to leave together.

- Use peer pressure against bullying behaviour.

- Help children think about strategies to use.

- Sexual and racial harassment also needs to be discussed and dealt with.

- Ensure that pupils know what to do when they are bullied.

- Tell the pupils from day one that bullying (verbal or physical) is not tolerated in the school. Everyone is expected to ensure that it does not happen and has the responsibility to tell - this is not telling tales.

- Have clearly stated procedures for dealing with children who bully.

There is safety in numbers

♦ Go around with a friend or two.

♦ Stay with groups of people even if they are not your friends.

♦ Get your friends together and say no to the bully.

♦ Only go into places where bullying happens if you have some friends or an adult near your.

Ask for help

♦ Tell a teacher who you know will take you seriously.

♦ Tell any other adult you can trust.

♦ Tell them again if the bullying does not stop.

Try to do something different

♦ Try not to show you are upset, which is difficult.

♦ Walk confidently even if you don't feel that way inside. Practice.

♦ Fighting back may make it worse. If you decide to fight back talk to an adult first.

♦ Just walk past if people call you unpleasant names.

♦ Try to crack a joke.

♦ Practice what you would say to the bully in front of a mirror.

Look after yourself

♦ If you are in danger get away. Do not try to keep possessions.

♦ If you are different in some way be proud of it! It is good to be an individual.

♦ Tell yourself you don't deserve to be bullied.

What to do if you think your child is being bullied

♦ Watch for signs - not wanting to go to school, minor illnesses, headaches, other pointers, avoiding friends, coming home with bruises or torn clothing, possessions disappearing.

♦ Listen to what your child says, try to establish that the problem really is bullying and not something else.

♦ Discuss with your child what you can do.

♦ Talk to the teacher or another sympathetic adult at school. Do this for as long as the bullying continues.

♦ Help your child to deal with the problem by him or herself. Be tactful.

♦ If you child needs escorting home, meet him or her round the corner, not at the school gate.

♦ Try not to be over anxious or over protective. It may sometimes be helpful to talk with the bully's parents, but before you do this, take advice from the school first.

♦ Do not promote a simple "thump back" approach this rarely helps and may only make things worse for your child.

♦ Most children are called names in school. Usually these names are used in a humorous way and are not meant to cause offence. If, however, your child is upset about some of the names used, then let the school know about this.

♦ If a name is used which refers to your child's physical characteristics then let your child know that you love him or her, for the way they are, including these particular characteristics which make him or her an individual.

yes/no/?

Putting bullying on the agenda

? Does our policy for pupil behaviour include strategies for promoting positive behaviour, preventing bullying and stopping bullying?

? What do we know about bullying in the school?

? Do we have a written statement about bullying which is available to governors, staff, pupils and parents?

? Should we start a process which aims to make bullying a whole school issue and tackle this at various levels and with different groups?

? How do we raise awareness amongst all the different groups involved?

? Does the school have a forum which has the opportunity to regularly monitor work to reduce bullying?

Information about bullying

? Is there enough knowledge within the school about the complexities of bullying? If so, how can this knowledge be disseminated? If not do we need external consultancy to support us in starting us off?   Is there expertise within our Local Authoriity?

? Do we need to survey the incidence of bullying? What questions do we want to ask? How should we ask them? Who should we ask? Should we use a ready made questionnaire or should we ask the pupils to devise one themselves? Should we use classroom discussions? Should we carry out a whole school audit of perceptions of bullying? Could we use Section 4 of the KS3 Behaviour & Attendance audit materials?

? Do we have a monitoring system be to log incidents of bullying? Is data analysed to identify incidents of bullying in relation to specific vulnerable groups eg. SEN, ethnicity?

? Do we encourage parents to inform us if their child is bullied? Do we mention bullying when we meet with the parents at formal school meetings or at open days? What is the perception of the support agencies about bullying in our school?

? Do victims and other pupils have a clear and confidential system of reporting on bullying? Does this system make it clear to pupils that they can trust the member of staff not to take any action which has not been previously agreed by the victim?

yes/no/?

Strategies to Reduce Bullying

? What do the governors, staff, parents, and pupils think we do about bullying? Does our behaviour policy clearly identify bullying and does it establish consistent procedures for dealing with the problem?

? Do our present pastoral care arrangements promote positive behaviour in such a way as to prevent bullying as well as deal with incidents as they occur? Are all the staff sufficiently involved in pastoral care? How can pupils be encouraged to accept pastoral responsibility for other pupils?

? Should pupils be made aware that bullying should be reported to any member of staff and that whoever takes the report will act immediately and sensitively?

? To what extent are the support services involved in supporting the school in its anti-bullying strategies?

Supervision

? Can we identify times of the day and locations within the school when bullying is more likely? How can we ensure that supervision is always available at these times and places?

? Do our mid-day supervisors know how to prevent bullying and respond to individual incidents?

? Do we have systematic feedback from non-school staff (bus drivers, school crossing staff etc.)?

? Are Year areas defined spaces or is there a considerable overlap between Year spaces which could reduce the sense of identity and security and make supervision less easy?

yes/no/?

The Curriculum

? Is the issue of bullying an integrated part of the curriculum? When is it specifically mentioned? In what way are staff encouraged to use cross curricular themes to discourage bullying?

? Is there any group dealing with personal and social education throughout the curriculum and is the issue of bullying part of this as a theme? Are Assembly themes regularly encouraging non bullying behaviour? How can this be done in a practical way?

? Do we make use of the many videos now available that illustrate bullying and through which pupils can explore different characters' perspectives and suggest anti-bullying strategies? Similarly, do we make use on theatre in education workshops?

? Is the multi-cultural curriculum dealing successfully with the sort of issues involved in bullying incidents?

? Do we include SEN pupils in curriculum work about bullying in an appropriate way for their individual needs.

? How are pupils encouraged to act positively when another pupil is experiencing difficulties? Does the timetable have space for a series of small group sessions with victims of bullying to act as a support and as a specific training area for social skills in dealing with bullying?

yes/no/?

Our own practice

? Are we confident in handling bullying situations? If not what would make us more so?

? How far are we consistent in dealing with bullying?

? Are there any aspects of our own practice which might encourage or condone bullying, eg are there pupils who are clearly not liked by teachers who are bullied by teachers themselves? Can pupils complain when they feel bullied by a particular teacher? Would you be willing not to be defensive if a pupil complained about you?

? Are there times when we are not conscious of less obvious bullying, eg name calling or isolating someone?

? Do we ever condone bullying by not challenging it when we see it happening?

Partnership with parents

? Do parents have clear guidelines on what to do when they think their child is being bullied?

? Are parents of children who bully and victims routinely informed and involved when incidents happen?

? Do staff have clear guidelines as to who communicates with the parents?

? Do parents often approach the school themselves to discuss their child's difficulties including bullying. If not, why not?

? Do we need to make parents' meetings more informal to allow a more open discussion?

yes/no/?

Staff development

? Have all teaching staff had access to staff development work on managing behaviour positively, or on anti-bullying work? (to a minimum of 2 hours in the past 2 years)

? Have further staff development needs been identified?

? Have all newly appointed teachers had access to the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies?

? Do newly qualified or newly appointed staff need additional development work?

? Do issues regarding relationships in school have an opportunity to be discussed as part of the school's normal cycle of management meetings?

? Have mid-day supervisors had training in managing behaviour positively and in anti-bullying training?

? Has at least one governor taken part in some of the school-based training and/or external training in anti-bullying work?

? Is managing behaviour positively and anti-bullying training part of each year's development plan?

yes/no/?

Monitoring

Monitoring should be taken to mean that the arrangements to meet targets set are being carried out.

? Has a member of the senior management team been appointed to co-ordinate all work on anti-bullying?

? Do all staff have access to a line manager who may advise and support their work on anti-bullying?

? How are individual incidents of bullying monitored?

Evaluation

Evaluation should be taken to mean that the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy is being measured against the incidence of bullying.

? Does the school have in place a process for annual or bi-annual evaluation of its anti-bullying work?

? Does the school use external support for this evaluation and report on its findings to the whole school community?

Stage 1

Awareness raising and consultation

Stage 2

Implementation

Stage 3

Monitoring

Stage 4

Evaluation

'Don't Suffer in Silence'

(from part 1, which provides detailed advice on anti-bullying policy development)

How should we set about developing our anti-bullying policy?

♦ appoint a senior member of staff to be responsible for co-ordinating all anti-bullying work in school;

♦ co-ordinator to set up a working group, including: pupil representation, a governor, a parent, middle manager, another member of staff, possibly a member of the support services;

♦ the working group should consider all available information, including the current policy;

♦ consider the main issues for the school to prioritise;

♦ consider ways of awareness raising and consulting with a range of people including the whole staff of the school, pupils, parents and governors.

♦ draft anti-bullying policy;

♦ consult; re-draft as necessary;

♦ implement;

♦ monitor and evaluate.

yes/no/?

Does our anti-bullying policy include...

? Rationale

? Statement of School Ethos

? Aims of the Policy

? Statement of Process - how was the anti-bullying policy drawn up? Who did it involve?

? The School's definition of Bullying, which should be clear and accessible to all.

? What to do about bullying:

Practical Guidelines for Staff

What to do if you see someone being bullied

What to do to help children who have been bullied

What to do to help children who bully other children

Practical Guidelines for Children and Young People

What to do if you see somebody being bullied

What to do if you have been bullied

Practical Guidelines for Parents/carers

Signs to look for if you think that your child is being bullied

What to do and who to contact at school

? Statement about Communication, how is the anti-bullying policy communicated to pupils, parents, governors and others?

? Statement on Monitoring and Reviewing the anti-bullying policy.

? A recognition that children who bully are often part of a group who support each other in the bullying.
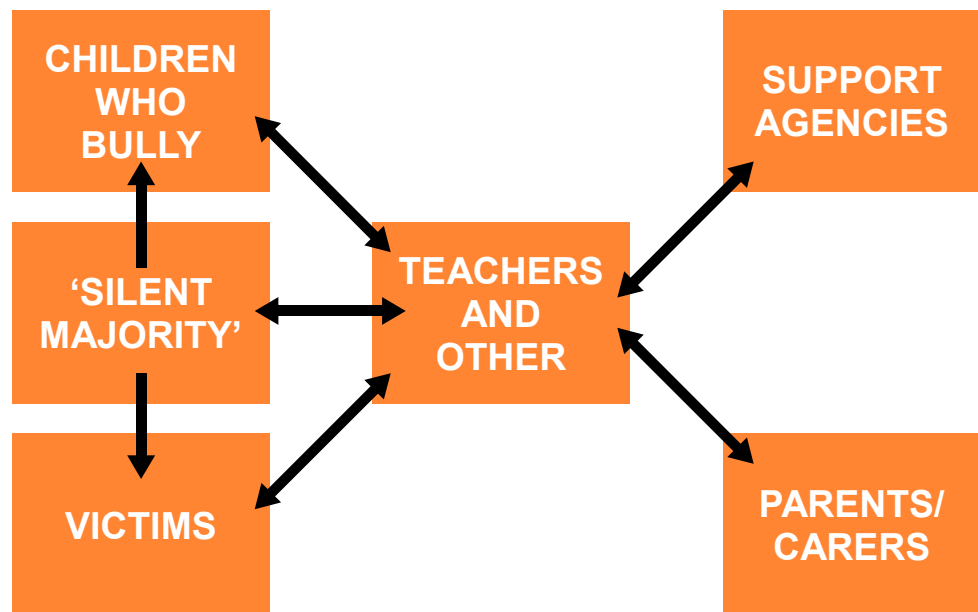
Children who bully

♦ clearly identify, highlight and encourage pro-social behaviour
♦ record all incidents of bullying
♦ teach conciliation techniques
♦ clear negative consequences/school rules
♦ encourage communication with staff
♦ consider using the support group approach
♦ consider using circle of friends
♦ reduce opportunities for peers to support bullying

The 'silent majority'

♦ encourage to share responsibility
♦ adopt-a-first-year scheme (peer mentoring)
♦ bullying prevention panel
♦ act as confidants
♦ encourage reports of bullying (eg email, text message, post box, in person to nominated peer or adult)
♦ raise awareness (eg survey, talks, essays etc)
♦ be involved in reconstruction of bullies/victims incidents
♦ get information on successful strategies of dealing with bullying
♦ encouragement to befriend victims of bullying

Victims

- teach assertiveness skills
- co-operative group work for support and raising self-esteem eg Circle of Friends
- 'at risk' register - for circulation amongst staff
- provide peer listeners/ counsellors, establish a buddy system
- system of confidential reporting (eg email, text message, post box, in person to nominated peer or adult)
- be vigilant for signs of distress
- ensure that they don't blame themselves

Teachers and other staff

- clearly identify, highlight and encourage pro social behaviour
- constant alertness to bullying
- model non-bullying behaviour (ie conciliatory vs aggressive)
- show that bullying is taken seriously (eg school rules, projects, mentioned often)
- increase supervision eg in toilets, corridors etc.
- firm control and discipline (consider sanctions/school rules/referral system)
- improve quality of environment (eg carpets, social areas)
- develop agreed school policy
- ensure awareness by all groups of this policy
- monitor and record all incidents of bullying
- identify a senior member of staff to co-ordinate all anti-bullying work

Support Agencies

- raise awareness
- training and support of staff, pupils and governors
- work with individual pupils
- involvement in group work
- assist home - school liaison

Parents/carers

♦ encourage parents/carers to communicate by telephone, letter, personally

♦ inform them about any projects

♦ call meeting to ask for their suggestions

♦ involve parents/carers actively in planning and monitoring strategies—both parents/carers of children who bully and of children who are victims of bullying

♦ group for parents/carers of victims

More information

'Don't suffer in Silence' (DfES 2002) includes an extensive list of materials including:

- handbooks
- background information
- whole school policy development
- curriculum materials
- working with pupils involved in bullying situations
- assertiveness training
- peer support
- training lunchtime supervisors
- improving playground activities and the school grounds
- governors
- families
- questionnaires and checklists
- helpful organisations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development: an OFSTED discussion paper. OFSTED 1994.

Guidelines on countering bullying behaviour in primary and post-primary schools. Department of Education 1993. ISBN 0 7076 03366.

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Forming a whole school anti-bullying policy. Jernier S and Gracetham, C Pastoral Care in Education Vol 13 No 3 Sept 1995 pp6-11.

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PACKAGES AND PRACTICAL MATERIALS

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