

ANTI-BULLYING Policy

Wickersley St Alban's C of E Primary School Anti-Bullying policy

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Guidance to support schools to address bullying

Introduction

Wickersley St Alban's C of E Primary School recognises there is a need to safeguard the welfare of all those within the school community and to encourage a culture of co-operation, acceptance and harmony both within and outside of school.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We have high expectations of all pupils, staff and parents and strive to create a school community in which all children can fulfil their potential.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Wickersley St Alban's C of E Primary School. If bullying does occur all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. The school actively implements its anti-bullying policy and has clear pathways for reporting, which are known to all members of the school community. If a crime has been committed during the bullying incident, the Community Police Officer will be involved as appropriate. All reported incidents will be actioned by our Anti-bullying Co-ordinator (Alison Adair). We celebrate diversity and promote cohesion within our community.

We believe every person is a unique individual made in God's image and worthy of respect. Every child has the right to be taught in an environment which is respectful and affirming of them, and is free from ridicule, intimidation and violence. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. There shall be no hierarchy of victims: all bullies, no matter the reason for this behaviour, will be challenged and made subject to appropriate sanction.

This policy reflects the following guidance:

'Preventing and Tackling Bullying', Department for Education 2011

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From January 2012, the Ofsted Guidance and grade descriptors for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005, refers to the key judgement on the behaviour and safety of pupils in the school linked to the way a school manages bullying:

Ofsted Criteria

When evaluating the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school, inspectors **must** consider:

- pupils' behaviour towards, and respect for, other young people and adults, including, for example, freedom from bullying and harassment that may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to special educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment or disability
- how well teachers manage the behaviour and expectations of pupils to ensure that all pupils have an equal and fair chance to thrive and learn in an atmosphere of respect and dignity

Ofsted Inspectors **must** take into account a range of evidence to judge behaviour and safety over an extended period, and should consider:

- types, rates and patterns of bullying and the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying and harassment, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to special educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment or disability
- the views expressed by pupils, and different groups of pupils, on behaviour and safety, respect for and courtesy towards others, and their views on harassment, racism, homophobia and different types of bullying
- the views of parents and carers, staff, governors and others

What is Bullying?

"Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally"

Bullying can be physical or emotional and it can take many forms (for example, cyber-bullying). Immediate physical safety and stopping violence are a priority; however, bullying can also occur because of prejudice against particular groups.

Definition from Anti Bullying Alliance

'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace.'

The Equalities Act 2010 aims to offer protection from Hate Crime in the form of discrimination, harassment and victimization. This covers 9 areas, 7 of which are pertinent to Children and Young People. The 7 areas more pertinent to C&YP are:

- disability

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- gender
- gender reassignment / transgender identity
- race
- faith
- sexual orientation/sexuality
- pregnancy/maternity

The two areas which do not specifically affect Children and Young People are Age and Marriage/civil partnerships, although these should be explored within the curriculum, for example in PSHE.

Some of the reasons pupils may be bullied link to the above areas covered by the Equalities Act 2010 and are as follows:

- Race, religion or culture
- Special Education Needs or disability
- Appearance e.g. being over-weight or health conditions
- Home circumstances and lifestyles including young carers and looked after children.
- Sexist or sexual bullying
- Gender
- Sexual orientation / Homophobic Bullying
- Transgender status / Transphobic bullying

The following are examples of bullying behaviours:

- **Verbal** e.g. name-calling, making offensive comments, taunting
- **Physical** e.g. kicking, hitting
- **Emotional** e.g. spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, excluding people from groups
- **Cyber** e.g. inappropriate texting/emailing, inappropriate use of MSN/Facebook e.g. sexting
- **Written** e.g. ridicule through drawings and writing e.g. on planners/PC's
- **Incitement** e.g. encouraging others to bully
- **Extortion** e.g. demands for money or personal property
- **Damage to Property** e.g. theft of bags, tearing clothes, ripping books

This is by no means a comprehensive list of reasons and behaviours and some evolve at different times.

Impact of Bullying

Research confirms the destructive effects of bullying on young peoples lives. Some of the effects are:

- Poor school attendance
- Lower academic achievement
- Low self esteem and poor self-worth
- Lack of confidence
- Anxiety
- Loss of identity
- Feelings of guilt
- Long term mental health difficulties

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Some Signs of Bullying

- Reluctance to attend school
- Poor school performance
- Behaving out of character
- Missing or damaged belongings
- Self-harm
- Increased episodes of illness (real / imaginary)

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and investigated.

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What we will do as a school

- Ensure the whole school community has an understanding of bullying and its consequences
- Appoint a designated member of staff as anti-bullying officer.
- Appoint an Anti-bullying Governor
- Ensure that there are clear and consistent pathways for reporting incidents of bullying which are known to all members of the school community.
- Implement a consistent system for recording incidents of bullying in line with RMBC guidelines
- Develop a preventative approach to bullying. Students will be encouraged to recognise that not only do they have rights; the choices they make bring responsibilities.
- Review the anti-bullying policy annually in consultation with the whole school community.
- Identify and make safe, areas in school where bullying could/has been known to occur.
- Be aware of factors which may cause some children to be more vulnerable than others.
- Work in partnership with the police should there be bullying incidents where a crime has been committed.
- Foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is not acceptable. This can be done by:
 - Regular praise of positive and supportive behaviour by all staff.
 - Work in school which develops empathy and emotional intelligence.
 - Any incidents are treated seriously and dealt with immediately.

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- If a child is found to be the victim of bullying outside school then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The victim's and perpetrators parents will be informed
- Ensure that Children and Young people have some involvement in the development of the anti-bullying policy and strategy along with the process of monitoring, review and evaluation.

How we will work with victims of bullying

- Ensure that there are clear pathways for reporting bullying.
- Ensure that victims are listened to
- Ensure that strategies are put in place to support individual needs
- Ensure victims are consulted, and kept involved and informed

How we will work with those accused of bullying

- Ensure that perpetrators are listened to acknowledging that they are sometimes themselves victims of bullying and abuse
- Ensure that strategies are put in place to support individual needs
- Ensure perpetrators are consulted, and kept involved and informed
- Implement appropriate sanctions and learning programmes for example:
 - counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
 - rewards/positive reinforcement for young people in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control
 - adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
 - fixed periods of exclusion
 - permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)

How we will work with bystanders

- Ensure that they are listened to
- Ensure that strategies are put in place to support individual needs
- Implement appropriate learning programmes and awareness raising about the impact of bystanders.

Strategies we may use include

- Circle Time
- Assemblies
- Peer mentoring
- Peer mediation
- Circle of Friends

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- Support from external agencies eg Rotherham Mind, Anti-Bullying Development Officer.
- Sharing good practice with other schools
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week

How we will educate the school community

- Emphasise through all aspects of the curriculum that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Ensure that the anti-bullying officer and governor attend appropriate training and development.
- Provide training opportunities for the whole school staff body.
- Ensure that students learn to recognise, respect and value the differences between groups of people within the school community including pupils with Special Educational Needs (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education via the curriculum)

How will we work with parents and carers

By ensuring that:

- there are clear pathways for parents/carers to report incidents of bullying, including who to actually report the concern to..
- every opportunity is given to parents/carers to share their concerns.

Where a parent/carer is dissatisfied with the schools handling of a situation then the head teacher will seek to resolve the situation informally. In the event of a formal complaint then the schools agreed complaints procedure will be invoked. (see appendix 2 Recommended procedures in school for reporting bullying).

If after following the schools formal complaints procedure the parent/carer is still dissatisfied the Local Authority complaints procedure for handling school complaints can be accessed [here](#).

How we will support staff

We will ensure appropriate agencies contact details who can support staff are available for example in the staff handbook and/or section of school website and on notice boards in the staff rooms e.g. Westfield Counselling Helpline 0800 092 0987, Human Resources and Union Representatives. Cyberbullying of staff from within the school community should be reported via the CEOP link (reporting symbol)

[Appendix 1. Support Agencies we may consult](#)

Anti Bullying Development Officer – Sue Horton Rotherham MBC
Susan.horton@rotherham.gov.uk Tel: 01709 823688

Rotherham MIND: ADD CONTACT DETAILS

Rotherham Healthy Schools: healthyschools@rotherham.gov.uk Tel 01709 740226

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Anti-bullying Alliance - **the alliance brings together over 60 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying. Their website has a parent section with links to recommended organisations who can help with bullying issues**
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk 02077303300

[Childline – advice and stories from children who have survived bullying](#)
08000 1111 WEBSITE

[Bullying on line](#) www.bullying.co.uk

[Parentline Plus – advice and links for parents](#) www.parentlineplus.org.uk
08088002222

[Parents Against Bullying](#) [01928 576152](tel:01928576152)

Useful sources of information

Mermaidsuk.org.uk – family and individual support for teenagers and children with gender identity issues. www.mermaidsuk.org.uk

Stonewall - the gay equality organisation founded in 1989. Founding members include Sir Ian McKellen. www.stonewall.org.uk.

Cyberbullying.org - one of the first websites set up in this area, for young people, providing advice around preventing and taking action against cyberbullying. A Canadian based site www.cyberbullying.org

Chatdanger - a website that informs about the potential dangers online (including bullying), and advice on how to stay safe while chatting www.chatdanger.com

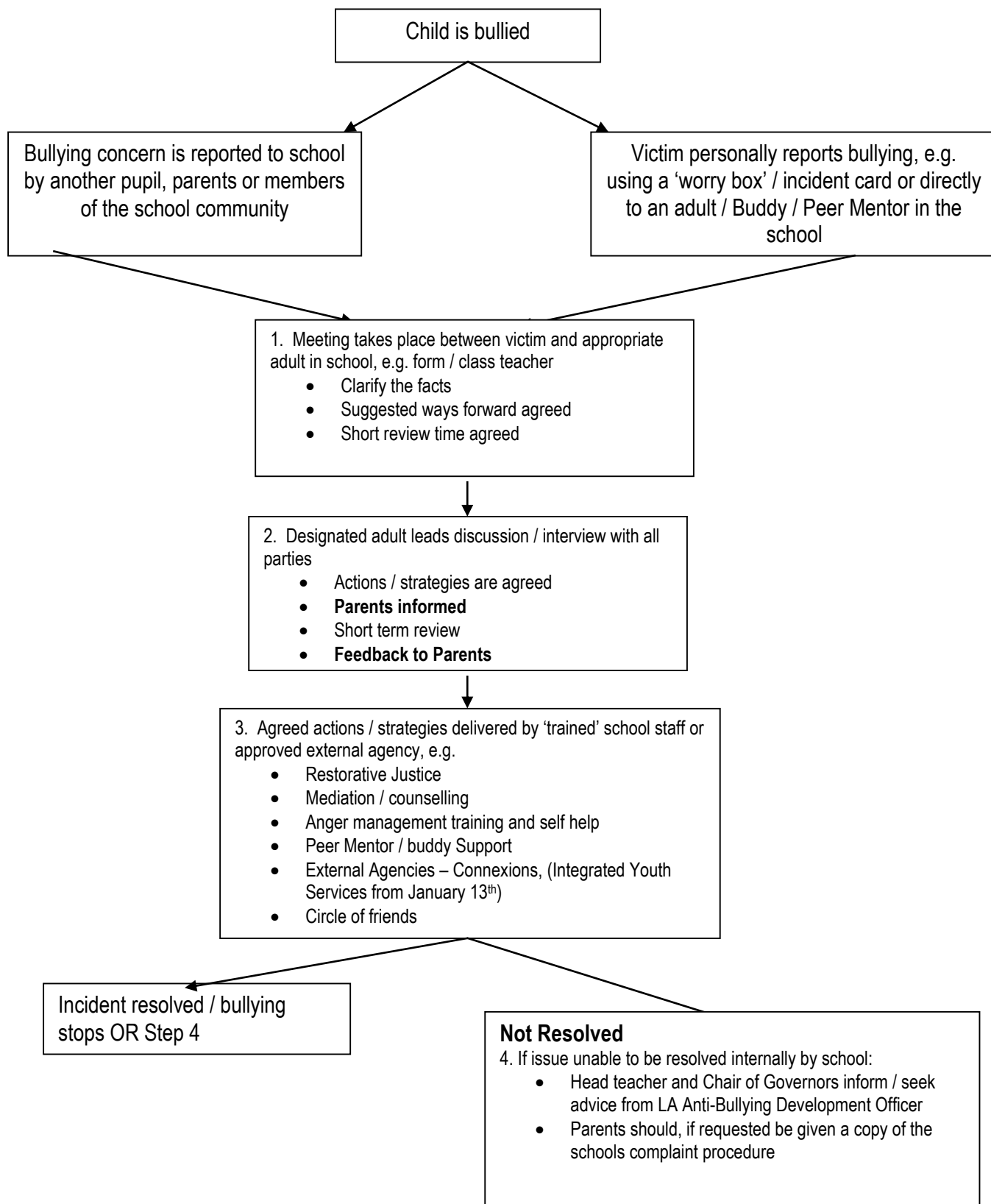
Think U Know - the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), has produced a set of resources around internet safety for secondary schools www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Know IT All for Parents – a range of resources for primary and secondary schools by Childnet International. Has a sample family agreement www.childnet-int.org/kia/parents

Appendix 2. Recommended procedures in school for reporting bullying: pathways of help

(All schools will have their own referral procedures. It is important to provide feedback to both Parents/Carers and pupil on an agreed basis)

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Appendix 3. Anti Bullying Policy checklist taken from Anti Bullying Alliance Website

- Make sure the policy begins with a clear definition of what bullying is
- Make sure the policy includes all forms of bullying – this should include specific reference to bullying relating to race, religion and culture, homophobic bullying, bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities, sexist and sexual bullying and the use of cyber technology to bully.
- Make sure the policy includes the preventative strategies that the school will use
- Make sure the policy gives a clear outline of how the school will respond to bullying incidents including the recording procedure and possible sanctions.
- Make sure the policy includes clear procedures for pupils or parents and carers who wish to report a bullying incident.
- Make sure the policy includes reference to bullying between pupils outside of school and bullying of staff.
- Make sure the policy references occasions where there may be police involvement (e.g. if crime has been committed)
- Make sure the policy is shared with all members of the school community (e.g. through the school website, newsletters)

Appendix 4. Ofsted briefing exploring the schools actions to prevent homophobic bullying.

Exploring the school's actions to prevent homophobic bullying

Briefing for section 5 inspection

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Age group: All age groups

Published: April 2012

Reference no: New number

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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Exploring the school's actions to prevent homophobic bullying

Inspectors should make sure that questions are age appropriate and asked in the right context.

With primary pupils inspectors might explore whether:

- pupils ever hear anyone use the word 'gay' when describing a thing or and whether they have been told by teachers that using the word 'gay' to mean something is rubbish is wrong, and why it is wrong
- pupils ever get picked on by other children for not behaving like a 'typical girl' or a 'typical boy'
- pupils have had any lessons about different types of families (single parent, living with grandparents, having two mummies or two daddies).

With secondary pupils inspectors might explore the above, and whether:

- there is any homophobic bullying or name calling in school or on social media sites
- if a gay pupil was 'out' in school, they would feel safe from bullying
- they have learned about homophobic/transphobic bullying and ways to stop it happening in school
- they learn in school about different types of families - whether anyone is, or would be, teased about having same-sex parents.

With senior leaders and when looking at documentary evidence inspectors might explore:

- whether they are aware of any instances of homophobic or transphobic language in school, if this is recorded and how it is acted upon
- whether the school's equalities, bullying and safeguarding policies address gender identity and sexuality
- if training has been provided for staff in how to tackle homophobic/transphobic bullying including language
- whether the school has taken any action to ensure provision meets the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils for example in Sex and Relationships Education and other aspects of PSHE including providing age appropriate advice and guidance
- how the school seeks to support LGBT pupils and those from LGBT families
- whether policies promote safety for all groups of pupils regardless of sexuality or gender identity, including the use of language
- if there is specific mention of gender identity and sexuality in the equality, diversity, behaviour and bullying policies
- whether policies include reference to carers as well as parents.

With governors inspectors might explore:

- how the school meets its statutory duty to prevent all forms of prejudice based bullying including homophobia and transphobia?
- whether they are aware of any homophobic/transphobic bullying or language in school and whether are incidents followed up effectively
- how they ensure that sexuality and gender equality are covered within the school's behaviour guidelines and policies.

Appendix 5. No Place for Bullying – Ofsted Report Summary June 2012

Report summary

No place for bullying

How schools create a positive culture and prevent and tackle bullying

A wide body of research indicates that bullying is a problem for many young people, and that some of this takes place in schools. The aim of this survey was to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions that schools take to create a positive school culture and to prevent and tackle bullying. A large part of the survey focused on pupils' own experiences and understanding of bullying and its effects. Inspectors considered how well pupils understood the school's expectations of their behaviour. They talked with pupils about what they thought they should do if they were bullied in school, whether they had been bullied while at their current school, and how well they thought the

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school dealt with bullying. Inspectors also explored pupils' understanding of discriminatory and derogatory language.

Between September and December 2011, Her Majesty's Inspectors visited 37 primary schools and 19 secondary schools for the main part of the survey. The schools were located in both urban and rural areas and varied in size and type. At their previous Ofsted inspection none had been judged to be inadequate. Altogether, inspectors held formal discussions with 1,357 pupils and 797 staff.

Inspectors found that the schools visited could be broadly split into three groups. In the best schools, the culture and ethos in the school were very positive. The schools' expectations and rules clearly spelled out how pupils should interact with each other. Respect for individual differences had a high profile. In these schools pupils developed empathy, understood the effect that bullying could have on people, and took responsibility for trying to prevent bullying. The way in which these schools planned and delivered the curriculum helped a great deal to bring about these positive attitudes because it gave pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of diversity and an assortment of strategies to protect themselves from bullying. These schools recorded bullying incidents carefully and analysed them to look for trends and patterns. They then used this information to plan the next steps. The action they took was firm and often imaginative. If pupils had been bullied then they felt very confident that action was taken and it stopped promptly. Governors were well informed and questioning about bullying.

The second and largest group of schools shared many of the features described above and had many strengths. These schools had a positive culture and most pupils were considerate of each other. Many of the schools had developed a range of effective strategies for pupils to learn about moral and social issues. However, their practice was not as consistent as that of the strongest schools and on occasion had areas of relative weakness. Sometimes the curriculum was not as well structured or opportunities to teach about diversity were missed. Sometimes the analysis of behaviour and bullying was not as sharp as it should be to enable the school to see exactly what the issues were or what actions needed to be taken next.

In the third small group of schools, the culture and the curriculum did not effectively develop pupils' understanding about diversity or help them to develop sufficient empathy for each other. Behaviour in these schools was more variable and interactions between pupils were not as positive. Incidents were dealt with when they happened but the preventative work was not as effective. In some of these schools pupils expressed some concerns about bullying.

Training for staff was an important aspect of the schools' work to prevent and tackle bullying. The training that the majority of schools had provided on bullying tended to be general and did not always focus on the different types of bullying that could occur and the implications of these. This led to some staff not feeling wholly confident to tackle all types of incident. At its best, training left staff very knowledgeable about the

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different forms of bullying that could be faced by pupils and feeling confident to deal with different forms of discrimination.

Many headteachers and staff spoke about the tensions that could exist between the culture that they were trying to instil and maintain in their schools, and aspects of the culture in the wider communities around the school. These tensions could relate to how people spoke to and treated each other generally, or to more specific attitudes towards particular groups. The schools sometimes had systematically to tackle racist, homophobic and aggressive attitudes that existed among parents and carers and in parts of their wider community that were in serious conflict with the school's values. Some schools had achieved significant success by working with parents and carers and members of the community to reach a better understanding.

Research evidence indicates that there are groups of pupils who are bullied disproportionately. These include disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils who are, or are perceived to be, homosexual. This aspect was considered in all of the survey visits and inspectors found that some pupils had been the targets of bullying for these apparent reasons. In particular, inspectors found that language that discriminated against both of these groups of pupils, and others, was common in many of the schools visited. Many pupils were well aware that such language was not acceptable, but it was often seen as 'banter'. In contrast, staff were not always aware of the extent of its use, or they saw it as banter, so did not challenge it. Staff also indicated that they did not always feel confident to challenge or have the strategies to do so. To extend this aspect of the survey, inspectors visited an additional four primary schools and five secondary schools that had specifically and successfully tackled prejudice-based attitudes. The case studies are presented in Part B of the main report; they do not form part of the key findings below.

Key findings

- In setting their expectations for behaviour, the primary schools visited placed a stronger emphasis than the secondary schools on values and on how pupils should treat one another. The primary school headteachers were more likely to describe their expectations in terms of the school's core values, while more of the secondary school headteachers focused on rules. Senior leaders varied in the extent to which they saw themselves and other staff as pivotal in leading and modelling positive behaviour and interactions.
- All the schools surveyed had a written behaviour policy and an anti-bullying policy. In the majority of the schools, these policies were separate documents. Only 12 of the 56 schools had combined them into one. The combined documents represented some of the strongest policies. This was because these schools, with one exception, saw bullying as part of a continuum of behaviour, rather than as something separate.
- Pupils in the primary and secondary schools were able to explain how the school expected them to behave. However, a greater proportion of primary than

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secondary school pupils could articulate the school's values, such as respecting each other. In the secondary schools, pupils tended to focus more on basic school rules such as wearing the correct uniform.

- In 14 of the schools the pupils surveyed agreed with each other that the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils of all ages and from all groups was positive. In 32 schools, pupils felt that there was a small but significant minority whose behaviour did not reach the expected standards. In 10 schools, pupils spoken with said that behaviour was variable, with some negative elements.
- Pupils in all of the schools could give a range of examples of disparaging language that they heard in school. This was related to perceived ability, race, religion, sexuality, appearance or family circumstances. Homophobic language was frequently mentioned. In contrast, staff often said that they did not hear any of this type of language in a typical week. Few schools had a clear stance on the use of language or the boundaries between banter and behaviour that makes people feel threatened or hurt.
- Almost half of the pupils surveyed wrote about an incident where they had felt picked on or bullied at some point while at their current school. Incidents related to friendship issues, personal appearance, family circumstances, sexuality, race, religion, ability, being seen as clever or good at something, disability or a combination of these aspects. Seventy-five per cent of questionnaire respondents in primary schools and 83% in secondary schools thought that bullying would stop if it was reported to an adult in the school.
- Despite significant strengths in some schools, inspectors found a range of weaknesses in how the schools recorded bullying incidents, the detail included in this recording and in its analysis. This undermined the schools' ability to use this information to shape future actions.
- Although headteachers usually reported to the governing body on general matters regarding behaviour, only 22 of the governing bodies surveyed received specific reports about bullying. The quality of the information they received was closely related to the quality of the school's recording and analysis of bullying incidents. Often reports to governors contained little analysis.
- In 24 of the primary schools and 15 of the secondary schools the curriculum placed a strong emphasis on helping pupils to develop positive values, to understand difference and diversity, to understand the effects that bullying has on people, and to protect themselves from bullying. The curriculum specifically focused on different aspects of bullying, including homophobia and racism, and cyberbullying. However, even in these schools disability was seldom covered as well as other aspects of diversity.
- In the best examples, planning clearly identified the links between personal, social and health education, citizenship, religious education and other curriculum areas, and there was a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils were able to extend and apply their learning in other subjects.

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- Fifteen of the schools with a strong curriculum extended this effective approach by carefully and continually adapting their curriculum and introducing initiatives in response to the school's changing circumstances, the analysis of behaviour and particular issues in the community.
- The schools that had thought the most carefully about preventing bullying and helping pupils to interact positively had recognised the importance of the physical organisation of the school and the organisation of breaktimes and lunchtimes, and had taken action to improve these aspects.
- The training that the schools had provided for staff on bullying tended to be general and did not always define and explain the different types of bullying that could occur or the implications of these. Some staff had not received training on bullying at their current school.
- Where staff had received training, the majority felt that this had been very effective in helping them to tackle issues around bullying. However, around a third of staff surveyed thought that they still needed more help to feel really confident. Staff felt least confident in terms of tackling prejudice-based language.

Main report published 19 June 2012
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110179

Appendix 6: “Cyberbullying” A qualitative study of children, young people and ‘sexting’

A report prepared for the NSPCC 2012

Top messages from the evidence

1. Threat from peers. For young people, the primary technology-related threat is not the ‘stranger danger’ hyped by the mass media but technology-mediated sexual pressure from their peers. For example, rarely did children express to us any concern about inappropriate sexual approaches from strangers (and when they did, they seemed able quickly to brush off the approach as from a ‘weirdo’, ‘pervert’ or ‘paedo’). Rather, the problems posed by sexting come from their peers – indeed, from their ‘friends’ in their social networks, thus rendering much commonplace advice (about being careful who you contact, or keeping your profile private) beside the point. The success of e-safety campaigns is evident in teenagers’ awareness of practices to reduce online risk from strangers, and it is time to shift the focus towards reducing risk from known peers. This poses a challenge for school based awareness strategies as a class is likely to contain varieties of victim, abuser and bystander simultaneously. Also challenging is the ever-widening circles of peers, more or less known, enabled by technology.

2. Sexting is often coercive. Sexting does not refer to a single activity but rather to a range of activities which may be motivated by sexual pleasure but are often coercive, linked to harassment, bullying and

even violence. There is no easy line to be drawn between sexting and bullying, for instance, and much may be learned from anti-cyberbullying initiatives to address the problem of sexting. To achieve this, teachers, parents and other adults must be willing to discuss sexual matters and sexual bullying and cyberbullying with teenagers, including as part of existing anti-bullying initiatives.

3. Girls most adversely affected. Sexting is not a gender-neutral practice; it is shaped by the gender dynamics of the peer group in which, primarily, boys harass girls, and it is exacerbated by the gendered norms of popular culture, family and school that fail to recognise the problem or to support girls. We found considerable evidence of an age-old double standard, by which sexually active boys are to be admired and 'rated', while sexually active girls are denigrated and despised as 'sluts'. This creates gender specific risks where girls are unable to openly speak about sexual activities and practices, while boys are at risk of peer exclusion if they do not brag about sexual experiences. It is important that safety initiatives provide gender sensitive support for girls without treating sexting as a girl-only or girl-initiated problem; the role, responsibility and experiences of boys in relation to sexting also deserve more research and practical attention.

4. Technology amplifies the problem. Technology is not neutral either: the specific features or affordances of mobile phones, social networking sites and other communication technologies facilitate the objectification of girls via the creation, exchange, collection, ranking and display of images. Technology providers should do more to provide easy-to-use, age-appropriate tools by which children and young people can avoid, reduce or seek redress for distress resulting from the creation, circulation and display of unwanted sexual images and text.

5. Sexting reveals wider sexual pressures. Although the extent of sexting cannot be determined from a small-scale qualitative study, most children interviewed were familiar with the practices referred to as sexting; while some had experienced or knew of others who had experienced sexting, also important was the finding that most felt in some ways oppressed by perceived sexual pressure – to perform, judge and be judged – from peers. Such pressures may vary by context, but the specificity of sexualisation pressures – e.g. expectations on appearance (being very thin, having large breasts or big muscles) or actions (viewing porn, tripping and touching up, performing blow jobs, sending images of own body parts) – should be discussed in order to undermine the culture of silence that further harms youth, especially girls.

6. Ever younger children affected. It is striking that although the year 10 teenagers interviewed were more sexually aware and experienced, with many stories to tell regarding their own/their peers' sexual and sexting activities, they also appeared more mature in their resilience and ability to cope. The year 8 children were more worried, confused and, in some cases, upset by the sexual and sexting pressures they face, and their very youth meant that parents, teachers and others did not support them sufficiently. It is unknown whether sexting affects still younger children but we recommend that research and policy initiatives are developed to look at primary children and transitions into secondary school.

7. Sexting practices are culturally specific. New technologies enable public displays of identity, which bring with them pleasures but also pressures to perform particular idealised forms of femininities and masculinities which are culturally, class and 'race' specific. Young people are also, however, managing globalised consumer oriented cultures of consumption, which present challenges and pressures to have the 'right' types of embodiment, commodities, and status symbols. Sexting for girls can involve being subject to oppressive, racialised beauty norms and hierarchies around feminine appearance and body ideals. Boys must negotiate competitive masculinity, where status can be generated in new ways via technology (such as soliciting, collecting and distributing peer-produced sexualised images of girls'

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bodies, which operate as a form of commodity or currency). It follows resources need to link sexting practices to an analysis of wider sexist gender relations and commercial culture, but also address the locally specific peer based forms that sexting takes.

8. More support and resources vital. To overcome the culture of silence, adult embarrassment, and a paralysing uncertainty over changing sexual norms, the adults who variously provide for youth – teachers, parents, industry, commerce and others – should develop an explicit discourse that recognises, critiques and redresses the gendered sexual pressures on youth. Sexting may only reveal the tip of the iceberg in terms of these unequal and often coercive sexual pressures, but they also make such pressures visible, available for discussion and so potentially open to resolution.