



Anti-Bullying Policy Guidance

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Author - Nadine Carroll

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Introduction

All children, young people and vulnerable adults in Knowsley have the right to go about their lives without fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. Knowsley Council is committed to providing safe environments for children, young people and adults, which includes addressing the issue of bullying so that they feel safe from harm.

The guidance is provided to support the good work that is already done in Local Authority and partner agencies to ensure that bullying is tackled as a safeguarding issue, not only in our schools but wherever children, young people, vulnerable adults and families come together and in the wider community as a whole.

Aim

The guidance supports the work of statutory, voluntary and community organisations in their approach to tackling bullying in all Knowsley school, youth and community settings. All children and young people deserve an environment where they feel safe and valued and in which they can flourish. The guidance, in conjunction with the anti-bullying policies of organisations aims to reduce the frequency of bullying incidents and to increase the likelihood that incidents are disclosed to responsible adults and to intervene effectively when bullying occurs.

As an authority, we aim to have a collective and proactive responsibility for promoting a culture where bullying is not accepted and will be challenged. We want Knowsley to be a place where all people feel safe and secure where they feel respected and are able to grow and develop.

Purpose

This guidance is an update from the previous anti bullying strategy (2012) and could be used in conjunction with the Knowsley Safeguarding Children Board's guidance on anti-bullying that can be found at <https://www.knowsleyscb.org.uk/children-and-young-people/bullying/>.

The guidance is aimed at supporting agencies across the borough that work with residents in various settings.

When bullying is suspected or is disclosed, reference should be made to the individual anti-bullying policies that each agency will have in place. This guidance can support any advice and actions that may take place as a result.

The list of groups/websites that is presented later in the guidance is produced to support your work around anti-bullying in your setting.

The Knowsley Context

A health related behaviour survey was conducted by the school health education unit in 2017. 25 Knowsley primary schools and 4 secondary schools took part comprising of 1425 pupils who were from year 6, year 8 and year 10 cohorts. The survey asked standard questions that were asked in a number of local authorities across the country.

From the analysis of this Knowsley group of children 20% said that they had experience some kind of bullying in or around their school in the year prior to the survey. This figure compares favourably to other areas that showed 33% of pupils had similar experiences.

The information suggests that although bullying still takes place, it does reduce in frequency as children get older.

Common forms of bullying revolve around damage to personal property, homophobic comments, racist comments and sexual pressure including both physical and verbal issues. Not surprisingly, cyber bullying was also stated as a common method of bullying.

Pupils identified that they felt some pressure from various sources such as exam/school work; family problems; crime; body image and concern over friends' state of mind. These pressures manifested themselves in many ways but for a small group (7-10%) consideration of performing self-harm or joining gangs.

The survey looked at online safety and the results showed that as pupils got older they had experienced greater access to extreme views and images. They identified that the number of requests to share explicit images of themselves both by people they know and don't know also increased and more significantly for girls.

Consultation

The following agencies were consulted in the creation of this guidance: -

Children's Social Care
Knowsley integrated provider services
Knowsley NHS
Knowsley Safeguarding Children's Board
Early Help
Children, young people and family services
Merseyside Police
Knowsley Youth Mutual
Knowsley Housing Trust
LA school services
Safer Communities

What is bullying?

'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.' **(Anti-Bullying Alliance)**

- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school/work place
- Everyone has the right to feel welcome, safe and happy
- We should treat everyone with respect
- If bullying happens it will be dealt with quickly and effectively
- Everyone should know where to get support if something happens
- Everyone should feel comfortable in reporting bullying knowing that it will be treated confidentially and appropriately

What types of bullying are there?

- Emotional (being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing - need to consider when 'banter' becomes hurtful)
- Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence)
- Extortion (demanding money/goods with threats)
- Cyber (all areas of internet, social media, email and internet chatroom misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of camera and video facilities including those on mobiles; trolling)
- Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Religion / Faith or beliefs
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact; sexually abusive comments; pressure to supply explicit images)
- Sexist
- Homophobic (because someone is / is thought to be gay or lesbian; or other issues of sexuality)
- Transphobic (because someone has a different gender identity or is thought to have one)
- Biphobic (because someone is, or is thought to be attracted to more than one gender)
- Disablist (because someone has a disability or learning disability)
- Child/Young Person In Care / Young Carer
- Different appearance
- Poverty/wealth
- Mental health issues / General health (e.g. diabetes, HIV)

Impact

You cannot underestimate the damage bullying can do to an individual child or adult. It causes considerable distress that can affect health and lead to multiple issues including depression and self-harm.

Children in particular may be held back from telling anyone about their experience due to either threats or by a feeling that nothing can be done to change their situation. Bullying should be taken seriously and a child offered support and reassurance that it is not their fault.

Parents, carers and agencies need to be aware of the possible signs of bullying and any changes in behaviour such as:

Signs of Bullying

Sometimes when children or young people get bullied their behaviour may change subtly or obviously and they may behave in one or more of the following ways:

Staff (S) Parents/Carers (P) or Friends (F) could be alerted to these

- Is frightened of walking to or from school or changes route (PF)
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus (PF)
- Begs to be driven to school (P)
- Doesn't want to leave the house (P)
- Changes their usual routine (PFS)
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) (P)
- Begins to truant (PF)
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence (PFS)
- Becomes aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable (PFS)
- Starts stammering (PFS)
- Threatens or attempts suicide (PFS)
- Threatens or attempts self-harm (PFS)
- Threatens or attempts to run away (PFS)
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares (P)
- Feels ill in the morning (P)
- Performance in school work begins to drop (PFS)
- Comes home with clothes torn, property damaged or 'missing' (P)
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (PF)
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost' (S)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises (PFS)
- Comes home 'starving' (P)
- Starts bullying others (PFS)
- Changes in eating habits (FP)
- Is frightened to say what is wrong (PFS)
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone (PFS)
- Nervous or jumpy when a cyber message is received (PF)
- Gives improbable excuses for their behaviour (PFS)

What causes Bullying?

It is unhelpful to label a child as a bully; the focus needs to be on supporting a change in their behaviour and identifying any wider support needs that the child may have.

It is important to recognise that children who bully may have significant needs themselves or be in need of therapeutic interventions

The reasons could be: -

- to feel powerful
- jealousy
- to feel good about themselves
- to be in control
- because they want something (attention, possession or friends)
- to look good in front of other people
- to feel popular
- because of peer pressure
- to be big/clever
- for fun
- because they are being bullied themselves
- because they see and pick on an easy target (e.g. someone who is vulnerable, won't tell anyone, is lonely or different in some way)
- because of their own mental health
- because they have problems / issues of their own
- because of messages in the media
- Parental / family attitudes
- Culture they are surrounded by

How can we prevent Bullying?

To create an environment where people feel safe to report incidents, all schools and settings that provide services for children should have an anti-bullying policy. This should explain their position around bullying and the proactive and reactive strategies that are in place and be reviewed regularly in order to stay relevant.

Key points to include in an anti-bullying policy are:

- A position statement;
- Lead staff members;
- A definition of bullying;
- The different types & forms of bullying;
- The role of bystanders;
- Reporting and recording procedures i.e. clear referral routes;
- How incidents will be responded to, monitored and reviewed;
- Communication with parents/carers;
- Proactive strategies to prevent bullying from occurring.

Whatever plan of action is implemented after issues have been identified, the plan must be reviewed with regular intervals and amended/updated as appropriate to ensure that the bullying has ceased.

It is important to include all members of the setting (school or other) in the policy development or review. This could include having anti bullying ambassadors taken from the groups using the setting be it children, adults or both

In order to maintain an effective strategy for dealing with bullying, staff should be provided with appropriate training to ensure that they have the skills and confidence to recognise and respond to incidents of bullying.

Who can help? *(summary information provided via the individual websites or the Department for Education)*

Anne Frank Trust

Runs a schools project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.

<https://annefrank.org.uk>

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

Barnardos

Through its LGBTQ Hub, offers guidance to young people, parents and teachers on how to support LGBT students and tackle LGBT prejudice-based bullying

<http://www.barnardos.org.uk>

Bullying on line

www.bullying.co.uk

Changing Faces

Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

<https://www.changingfaces.org.uk>

Chatdanger

A website that informs young people about potential online dangers (including bullying) and advice on how to stay safe while chatting.

www.chatdanger.com

Childline

A free, private and confidential service that can be accessed online or by phone anytime.

www.childline.org.uk

ChildNet International

Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

<https://www.childnet.com>

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

Ditch the Label

Provides psychological and physical support to those who are impacted by bullying in offline and digital environments; such as through schools and colleges and in collaboration with online communities and social networks. They focus on those who have experienced bullying, those who are bullying and stakeholders such as parents/guardians and teaching professionals who are also impacted.

www.ditchthelabel.org

Digizen

Provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

<http://www.digizen.org>

EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia)

Provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.

<https://www.eachaction.org.uk>

Educate Against Hate

Provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW)

A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.

<https://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/>

Family Lives

Advice and links for parents.

<http://familylives.org.uk/>

Information, Advice and Support Service Network

Every Local area has an information, advice and support service, providing information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk>

Internet matters

A not-for-profit organisation that has a simple purpose – to help keep children safe in the digital world. Backed by the UK’s most prominent internet industry players, BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media, and supported by leading child online safety experts, they are able to offer advice and information available on tackling e-safety issues. They believe in keeping children safe online and are looking to help people make the right decisions for themselves and their families.

www.internetmatters.org

Kick It Out

Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.

<https://www.kickitout.org>

Kidscape

Provides children, families, carers and professionals with advice, training and practical tools to prevent bullying and protect young lives through giving advice, delivering training and working directly with children, parents, carers and professionals.

www.kidscape.org.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

Mencap

Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/>

MindEd

Provides a free online training tool for adults that is also available to schools. It can be used to help school staff learn more about children and young peoples mental health problems. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.

<https://www.minded.org.uk>

National bullying helpline

A nationally recognised, advice centre specialising in helping victims of bullying that can occur in the home, the community, the school or workplace.

www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk

Proud Trust

Helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.

<https://www.theproudtrust.org>

Restorative Justice Council

Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

<https://restorativejustice.org.uk>

Schools Out

Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.

<http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

Show Racism the Red Card

Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.

<https://www.theredcard.org/educational>

Stonewall

The lesbian, gay and bisexual equality organisation founded in 1989. Founding members include Sir Ian McKellen.

www.stonewall.org.uk

Tell MAMA

Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA) allows people from across England to report any form of Anti-Muslim abuse, MAMA can also refer victims for support through partner agencies.

<https://tellmamauk.org/>

The Diana Award

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

<https://diana-award.org.uk>

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

Other department for education advice and guidance includes: -

- DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance.
- Mental health and behaviour in schools advice for school staff.

- Counselling in schools a blueprint for the future: advice for school leaders and counsellors.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- Working together to safeguard children.

(Information taken directly from appropriate Government sources)

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

The Equality Act 2010

A key provision in The Equality Act 2010 is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into force on 5 April 2011 and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to: -

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Children's Act 1989

Under the Children's Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Some acts of bullying may be a criminal offence.

Criminal law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.