

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21st February 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Anti-Bullying Policy and Practice

WARDS: All

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an overview of work to develop a local authority anti-bullying policy and guidance.
- 1.2 To seek Executive Board approval for the adoption of this policy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Executive Board approve this policy for adoption by Halton Schools and as the basis for the development of a broader Halton Anti-bullying strategy.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Bullying is the principle issue about which children and young people contact the office of the Children's Commissioner and Child Line and we know locally that young people see it as one their major issues. The DfES now DCSF have been in the process of issuing new guidance on anti-bullying for a considerable time. This has now been published, entitled "Safe to Learn". This local policy is in accordance with that guidance.
- 3.2 National and local drivers make dealing with bullying a priority.
 - Every Child Matters: Change for Children (DfES)- Dealing with bullying, discrimination and harassment is a key aim in the stay safe and enjoy and achieve outcome as well as impacting on the other outcomes.
 - These outcomes are central to the Children Act 2004 and the requirement for agencies to co-operate to improve the well being of children.
 - Working Together 2006 states that all settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.
 - Under the Education Act 2002 local authorities and schools including independent schools have a duty to "safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils" This includes addressing bullying.
 - School Standards Framework Act 1998 makes school governing

bodies responsible for having a written policy on measures to prevent all forms of bullying and states that bullying incidents must be recorded and reported to the governing body.

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 – OFSTED inspectors consider measures being taken to address inappropriate behaviours such as bullying and the measures taken to combat them including the recording of incidents.
- Numerous other pieces of legislation relate to bullying including United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, the Human Relations Act 1998, The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination act 2005 and the Anti-social Behaviour act 2003.
- The recent review of Halton's Children and Young People's Plan re stated that dealing with bullying remains a priority and set the following targets:

SS1 Awareness raising and community engagement

SS2 More children feel safe from bullying and discrimination within schools by the continued implementation of anti-bullying policies, the establishment of good local baseline information and systems for self-reporting which are monitored and reviewed by 2009.

3.3 Progress to date

- A small group of staff from within the CYPD formed to create guidance for schools and other settings.
- Consultation has taken place with a range of stakeholders including many young people across a wide age range including pupils with Special Needs and Looked After Young People, school staff and governors.
- Anti-bullying guidance draft document has been produced.
- A self-evaluation tool for schools and other settings has been produced.
- The DCSF Anti-bullying Charter has been amended for use in Halton.
- Draft guidance has been shown to the North West Anti- Bullying Alliance Co-ordinator who would like to share the document with other authorities.
- Discussions have taken place with a wide range of community organisations to look at developing a wider Halton anti-bullying strategy encompassing all settings where young people receive services.

3.4

The guidance aims to:

- Support school governors, staff and volunteers in all children's settings, children and young people parents and carers in the development of their own anti bullying policies.
- Advise on the monitoring and review of anti-bullying policy and practice.
- Build on the good practice, which is already present in Halton.

- Promote national and local priorities.

The guidance includes:

- A definition of bullying
- Forms of bullying
- Why bullying is an issue
- The national and local context
- Policy development framework
- Self review guidance
- Recording and monitoring systems
- Promotion of an anti-bullying Charter for Halton
- Advice for parents/ carer's children and young people.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This is an area that Local Authorities are expected to take a lead in as part of the Stay Safe Every Child Matters Outcome and links closely to wider Safeguarding agenda.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

This guidance supports the delivery of the Every Child Matters Agenda and addresses an area that young people have identified as one of their key priorities.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton – None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

There are strong links between work to address bullying and the Healthy Schools Agenda.

5.4 A Safer Halton

Work to address bullying is directly linked to the Respect and Anti social behaviour agendas.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal – None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The absence of a Local Authority policy framework in this area makes it difficult to articulate our expectations in relation to the standards that we expect in dealing with bullying issues. As anti-bullying is clearly identified within the Stay Safe outcome the absence of a clearly articulated policy could have a detrimental impact on JAR judgements.

The production and dissemination of this guidance and good practice is in itself a control mechanism

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The guidance document recognises bullying as an equalities issue and promotes positive relationships to ensure that all members of the school or setting are fairly treated, valued, looked after and listened to. It engenders a respect for difference and diversity and celebrates the uniqueness of the individual.
(Halton Anti-bullying Charter)

8.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

It is necessary for the LA to provide a clear anti-bullying framework.

9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None considered.

10.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

As soon as approved.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Anti Bullying Guidance	Grosvenor House	Christine Johnson
DCSF – Safe To Learn	Teachernet website	