

# Warrington Partnership Children and Young People

## Anti-Bullying Policy November 2009



## **Anti-bullying policy**

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## **Introduction**

This policy has been developed in accordance with Section 175 of the 2002 Education Act, which places a duty on local authorities, and governing bodies of schools to make arrangements to carry out their function to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Addressing bullying is expressly mentioned as one of these functions.

As guidance, it builds upon ideas contained within The Children's Act 2004

- Bullying: effective action for secondary schools (Ofsted 2003)
- Bullying: don't suffer in silence (DfES 2002)
- The Key Stage 3 Strategy: behaviour and attendance (2003)
- DCSF guidance: Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (2008) including Cyber bullying
- Warrington's e-safety policy and guidance
- Bullying and Harassment Policy, WBC

Schools must have anti-bullying practices and procedures and local authorities must ensure that their schools comply with their duties.

This guidance should be used in conjunction with other documents relating to safeguarding children and young people.

## **Our purpose**

This policy has been designed to help the Council to meet its statutory duties relating to the safeguarding and welfare of children and is underpinned by the Warrington's Children and Young People's Plan.

The implementation of this policy will be endorsed by all Warrington schools, Children's Services and partner agencies to help to ensure that ALL children within Warrington achieve the five core outcomes under Every Child Matters:

1. Being Healthy
2. Staying Safe
3. Enjoying and Achieving
4. Making a Positive Contribution
5. Achieving Economic Wellbeing

## **Vision statement**

*"We believe that every child and young person in Warrington has the opportunity to reach their potential."* We aim to encourage individuals, institutions and communities to challenge, remedy and prevent bullying to create a culture where that vision can be achieved.

## **Our statement of intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all children and young people so that they can thrive and learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our schools and community. Should bullying occur, all children and young people should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a person in authority.

## **Healthy School Standard**

The National Healthy Schools Standard (NHSS) recommends the development of anti-bullying initiatives as part of a whole school approach to raising educational standards, improving the health of children and young people and reducing social exclusion.

## **Children's Emotional Health and Well-being team**

The issues that children see as sensitive and affecting their well-being are often very different from those which adults consider sensitive. Children's sensitivities stem from their need to be unique while not being different from others, to be valued, to be secure, to be listened to. They want their feelings to be acknowledged and valued: feelings, about separation, parting, loss, death, about leaving childhood behind, about love and loving. Young children may struggle for words to describe frustration, empathy, delight, jealousy, hope, isolation, uncertainty, conflict, remorse, fear and joy. Whilst their language may be limited or emotions hidden beneath bravado, their feelings are as complex as any adult's.

## **Warrington Youth Support Service**

Connexions personal advisers and youth workers support young people by:

- offering information and advice on how to deal with bullying
- acting as a source of information for young people, their parents and other professionals regarding websites and resources that help to address bullying
- negotiating and advocating on behalf of individuals for provision of additional support where required
- providing information to the local authority on number of bullying incidents reported to Warrington Youth Support Service to help monitor the implementation and impact of local strategies to eliminate bullying

## **Cheshire Constabulary**

All children and young people have the right to live in an environment which is free from fear. We all have a duty to do all that we reasonably can to protect children and young people from harm. Bullying, intimidation, harassment and other anti-social behaviour should not be tolerated in any situation or environment. The Cheshire Constabulary is committed to working together with our partner agencies to effectively tackle the problem of bullying, support victims of bullying and to take effective action in appropriate cases. The Cheshire Constabulary is very pleased to support the Warrington Partnership Anti bullying Policy.

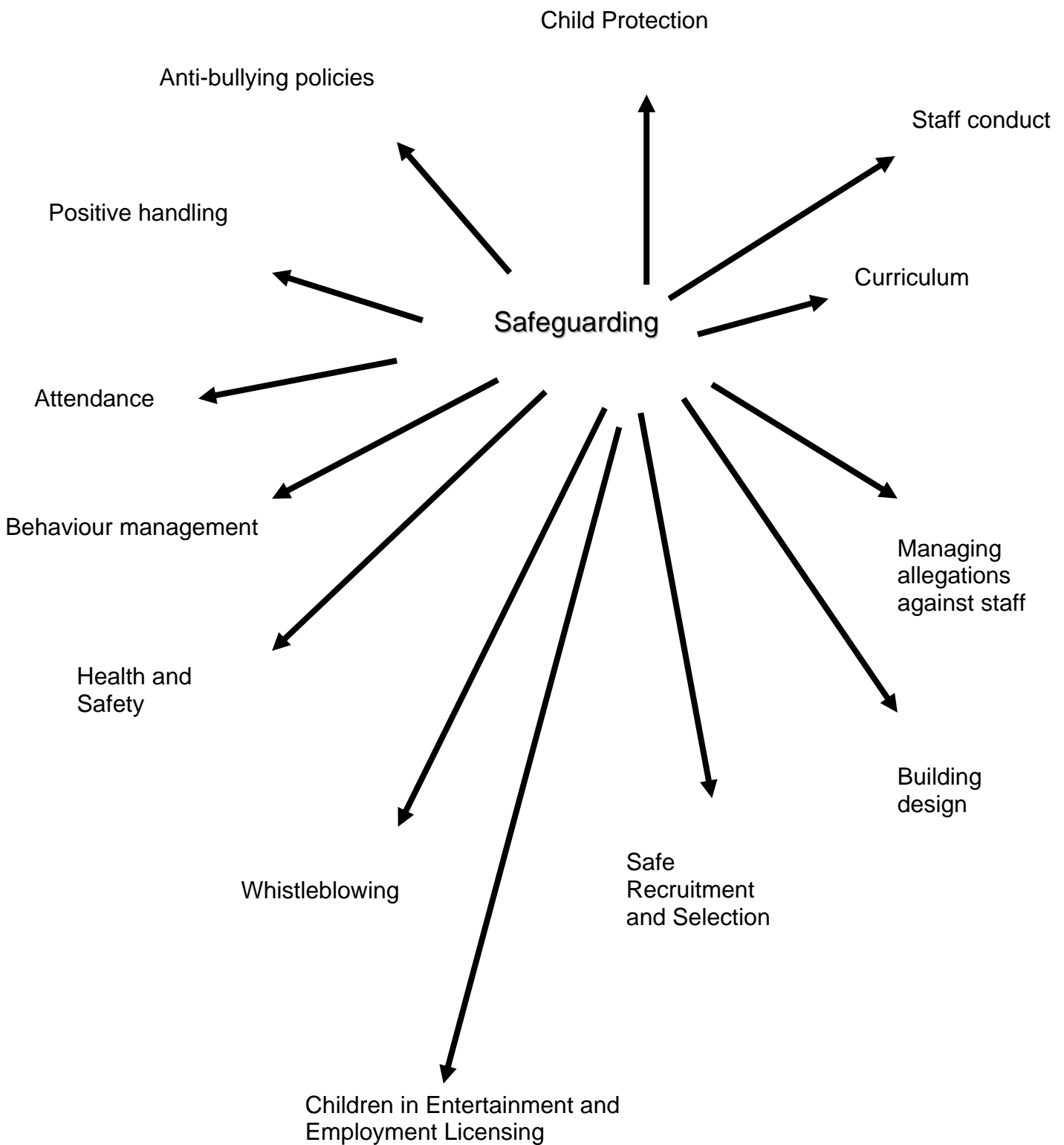
## **PCT**

Bullying can have a huge physical effect on a young persons health and wellbeing as well as an emotional effect, the **school health advisers** offer a 'drop in' service in each school and are able to liaise with teaching staff, parents and other agencies on behalf of the young person to ensure the best outcome for that young person,

**Warrington Safeguarding Children's Board** supports this policy.

## **IMPACT – Warrington Youth Council**

IMPACT are very positive about this policy and are pleased that the Partnership is taking the issue of bullying seriously and is also producing this document.



The above diagram highlights, for everyone, the various components, which form a picture of what safeguarding is. Safeguarding is everyone's business, everywhere, all the time.

## **The role of the local authority**

The local authority supports schools in tackling bullying by:

- providing training and support materials relating to preventative measures including climate and ethos, to non-school based staff who have direct contact with young people on public access personal computers
- publishing guidance and offering advice for schools in how to produce an anti-bullying policy
- providing training relating to preventative measures to support governors
- working with partner agencies to monitor, evaluate and review their response to bullying
- monitoring the implementation and impact of the local authority's guidance
- sharing examples of good practice

## **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying hurts!

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Children and young people who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Everyone has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

## **What is bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person, usually repeated over a period of time. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and, if not recognised or resolved, can lead to abuse.

There are two types – emotional and physical.

Examples of bullying can include these:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, using threatening gestures
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist – using racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Gender and sexual – making unwanted physical homophobic contact or sexually abusive comments because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Disability related – name-calling, using gestures, tormenting, threatening, because of, or focussing on, the issue of disability or special need
- Cyber – all areas of Internet, such as email and Internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, ie camera and video facilities.

## Signs and symptoms

A child/young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Transition can precipitate problems which, without early intervention, can lead to disaffection or vulnerability. For example, transition between:

- home and infant school
- infant and junior school
- primary and secondary school
- home and school after a long absence, for example, due to illness or living abroad
- returning to school after a period of exclusion
- those entering school outside the normal year of entry, especially those who have attended a large number of schools or who may not yet be able to speak English, may also experience heightened levels of bullying.

## **Racial harassment**

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, schools must have a published race equality policy and monitor and assess the impact of their policies on pupils of different ethnic groups. Schools are required to monitor all racist incidents using the required definition.

## **Sexual and homophobic bullying**

The Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfEE 2000) states that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions, offer support and be able to deal with homophobic bullying.

## **Bullying using technology**

Children and young people are finding new ways of bullying others. There are now opportunities to bully by text message, photos, email, chatroom and even specially created hate websites.

Young people need to be guided to use their mobile phones and the internet, safely and should be taught what to do if things go wrong or if anything makes them feel uncomfortable, through the promotion and development of a culture of confident technology users.

## **Children and young people who are especially vulnerable**

Bullying can seriously disrupt an individual's personal, social and educational progress and achievement. Particularly vulnerable to bullying are those who are physically or learning disabled, young people who experience abuse or neglect, gay and lesbian young people, children / young people from minority ethnic communities and Looked After Children. Others perceived to be different may also be picked on for instance, in terms of their size or shape or because they wear glasses. Some children are bullied for no apparent reason and may be bullied by former friends. Sometimes the pupil who bullies at school may be bullied in another context.

Ref: Disability Discrimination Act 2005

## **Reasons why children and young people don't report bullying**

- They believe parents, teachers or leaders cannot do anything about it
- They believe parents don't understand about school life
- Peers expect you to stand up for yourself and to be able to cope
- Telling adults only makes it harder
- You feel ashamed of being unpopular

- You feel you must deserve it
- You are too frightened to tell
- You just have to put up with it, it's part of life

## **Factors which may encourage children to bully**

It may be useful for staff to consider what factors may predispose young people to become bullies. Bullying behaviour amongst children and young people can be a result of individual characteristics, home experiences and school life.

Home	Little social status available – little verbal interaction, high physical / verbal aggressions
Individual	Charismatic and / or dominant within the peer group Limited interpersonal skills Likely to have been a victim of bullying in the past May have a high degree of stress in their own lives
School / Other Establishment	No effective 'Whole School' approach to self-review No clear rules / boundaries / interventions No policy re: unacceptability Models of teachers / other adults bullying – covert support Opportunities to bully – breaks, lunch, waiting for a teacher or supervisor, in a changing room Geography of the building – hidden corners, unsupervised areas Poor communication with parents

## **Factors which may make a child or young person more likely to be bullied**

Likewise, the following characteristics have been shown to be of significance in relation to children who are victims of bullying.

Home	Possibly overprotective – not allowing independence – non-assertive models Lack of awareness about growing up Lack of "street cred" – appearance / social life that is 'different' Too frightened to tell, scared of repercussions / escalation
Individual	Minor disabilities Clumsiness Physical features / colour of skin / colour of hair / dress / speech / height / weight Unassertiveness Sensitivity – highly sensitive or apparently insensitive Few friends, difficulty in forming relationships Low self-esteem – few attributes esteemed by peer group

School /	No acknowledgement of difficulty
Other	Little or no security
Establishment	No policy – weak pastoral system, nature of school or other establishment's culture
	No communication with parents

## **Giving children and young people the confidence to tell**

It is imperative that children and young people have the confidence to tell adults about bullying behaviours that they witness or experience, if bullying is to decrease. Very early on, even in nursery, children can learn that telling an adult that they are being teased / bullied may rebound on them and this may lead them to feel vulnerable.

Schools and other settings need to encourage young people to report bullying cases and to have effective support mechanisms in place for this to happen. The rates of telling will not increase unless young people believe that they will be supported.

Establishing that trust can be made easier by:

- listening to young people
- consulting with young people
- publicising procedures for dealing with bullying
- responding to all incidents of bullying in a consistent manner

Research shows that young people who feel they could exercise some control over their situation felt more competent and effective.

## **The behaviour of bystanders**

Young people may fail to help someone who is being bullied for a variety of reasons. Research suggests that this is not apathy, rather a feeling of not knowing what to do as well as having fears that they, themselves, will be teased or bullied. Children and young people may also be apprehensive that they will not receive the support of peers and teachers. Schools and other settings would benefit by making explicit, the vital role of bystanders in helping to eliminate bullying.

## **How to tackle issues with people involved in bullying**

- Talk slowly and don't insist on information; show concern
- Start a general conversation and be prepared for expressions of guilt, shame, anger, fear and other emotions and encourage the person to explore their feelings
- Be aware of any hints or red herrings
- Give assurance that you are taking this seriously
- Remain empathic and show your trust

- Help the young person plan a response that is positive and realistic
  - Signpost the person to other sources of help or guidance
- \* It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying. Should anyone talk about or threaten suicide, professional help must be sought immediately.

Anyone who bullies should be made aware of the effect of their actions. It should be made clear to them that they are bullying, that their behaviour is unacceptable and that it will not be tolerated. It should also be recognised, however, that often, young people who bully, need help and support and that there is a duty to ensure they receive it. Understanding why they have engaged in bullying behaviour and knowing how to respond differently, in similar situations, will reduce the risk of repeated behaviour.

Support is available from a wide range of trained professionals.

Schools and other educational or recreational settings where young people engage with each other and adults, have a responsibility to develop an ethos where everyone is:

- able to feel safe from intimidation, threat or harm
- valued for their own personal worth
- treated with respect and kindness and encouraged to develop an empathy with others
- able to teach, learn and offer and receive support
- aware of their responsibilities to be concerned for the welfare and safety of others
- friendly, courteous and co-operative and respects property with respect

## **Peer support schemes**

Peer support schemes provide a safe opportunity for young people to share concerns and explore their own solutions to a range of difficulties. In order to be effective, there must be adult involvement.

These schemes may take different forms:

- Peer befriending or “buddy” scheme which is informal
- Peer education; sharing knowledge and skills in a formal setting
- Peer mentoring; a supportive, organised relationship between two children or young people
- Peer mediation; trained pupils work to encourage problem solving between individuals
- The “Lean on Me” resource has been designed and implemented, jointly by Warrington NSPCC and Healthy Schools and is recognised, nationally. See website [www.mandbf.org.uk](http://www.mandbf.org.uk).

## **Objectives and development of the policy**

- All people in our community should have an understanding of what bullying is and know that bullying issues are taken seriously
- All people in our community should know what our policy is and follow it when bullying is being reported
- All people in our community should know that bullying will not be tolerated and should be prepared to report or challenge unacceptable comments and behaviour
- All people who work with children and young people should receive appropriate training to meet their identified needs to enable them to apply their anti-bullying policy responsibly
- All people who work with children and young people should be aware that effective supervision, particularly in potential trouble spots, can help to safeguard young people significantly
- All people should have the chance to participate in the development, application, monitoring and review of anti-bullying policies which may affect them
- The production of a policy is only one element of an overall strategy

## **Monitoring the policy**

A monitoring system enables a school or other establishment to follow up and record progress, and to ascertain the effectiveness of the policy.

A system for recording bullying incidents as they occur will be essential. This needs to be “user friendly”. It can be helpful to use some kind of checklist involving children and young people. Records should include:

- who was involved (or alleged to be involved)
- where and when it happened
- what happened
- what action was taken
- follow up action

No two establishments will have identical policies as the document has to reflect their particular needs. The key messages in the policy need to be accessible to all members of the school, or establishment and the community. Following consultation and ratification it must be communicated and put into action.

## **Review / evaluation**

In order to be sure that your policy is making a difference, you will need to consider how you will set about measuring the impact of your policy. The following are some simple indicators of change. Some are more directly related to bullying than others.

### **Possible indicators of change**

- Reduction in the levels and duration of reported bullying incidents
- Increased willingness to “tell” about bullying by bullied pupils, their parents or bystanders
- Improved attendance, at school and at another provision
- Enhanced achievement, involvement
- More parents opting to send their child to your school, or provision

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. There may be a range of other measures that children and young people, staff or parents may suggest.

Bullying is not just something that happens to children and young people; anyone, young or old, can be involved in bullying and should know that support can be accessed by all.

## Useful websites

Anti-bullying Alliance	<a href="http://www.ncb.org.uk/aba">www.ncb.org.uk/aba</a>	Guidance and support links
Anti-bullying Network	<a href="http://www.antibullying.net">www.antibullying.net</a>	(suitable for adults working with under 11 years and for children)
Beat Bullying	<a href="http://www.beatbullying.org.uk">www.beatbullying.org.uk</a>	(Suitable for adults working with young people up to 13 years and for the young people)
Bullying Online	<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>	(Suitable for adults working with children under 11 years and for children)
Kidscape	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>	(suitable for all ages of children and young people and for parents / carers)
NSPCC	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>	This site also offers further support, links and advice
DfES (DCSF)	<a href="http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying">www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying</a>	Guidance for schools
IYS	<a href="http://www.kooth.com">www.kooth.com</a>	Young people can chat with other young people or with an on-line counsellor
There 4me	<a href="http://www.there4me">www.there4me</a>	On-line access to support for children and young people
Talk Don't Walk	<a href="http://www.talkdontwalk.org.uk">www.talkdontwalk.org.uk</a>	A service for young people who may run away
Thinkuknow	<a href="http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/cybercafe">www.thinkuknow.co.uk/cybercafe</a>	This site provides information for each age group as well as for parents and professionals

## Helpful organisations

- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 020 7354 8321
- Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345
- Kidscape Parent's Helpline (Monday – Friday 10 – 4) 0845 1205 204
- Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
- Youth Access 020 8772 9900
- NSPCC (Warrington) 01925 581200
- Talk Don't Walk 0800 085 2136
- Childline 0800 1111
- GLYSS 07747 473 829