Nottinghamshire County Council

Anti-bullying Policy 2016-2018

Introduction

Bullying in all its forms including cyberbullying is still a major concern for children and young people. Its affects last through childhood and into adult life and can result in mental health issues and low self-esteem.

In the 2016 NSPCC How Safe are our Children Report, ChildLine reported that bullying, self-harm and suicidal issues were also among the top five main concerns counselled in the previous year.
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/how-safe-children-2016-report

Whist we acknowledge these harmful effects on the target of bullying it is also important to note that it is an issue for the whole community not just the target and the bully. We need to understand and support children and young people who display bullying behaviour to change their behaviour as well as looking at the rest of their community who may be drawn in to group behaviour which colludes with, encourages or leaves bullying behaviour unchallenged. This is also increasingly happening online.

Part of any anti-bullying strategy needs to be accepting that it is everyone's responsibility to challenge bullying behaviour and to offer support to help discourage it, as well as help those who are vulnerable to build up their resilience to help them develop strategies to deal with bullying.

It is important to address bullying whether it is in a workplace, school or in a neighbourhood so that the message is clear that bullying is unacceptable.

In the 2016 Ditch the Label Survey, (a national survey), they estimated that approximately 2.9 million young people aged 12-20 have been bullied, 1.5 million of these within the past year. 145,800 say they are bullied on a daily basis.
http://www.ditchthelabel.org/annual-bullying-survey-2016/

In the study they also found that as a result of bullying, 31% have self-harmed and 44% developed depression. The Department for Education (DfE) has produced guidance for all schools, including academies and free schools. This outlines their duties towards preventing and tackling bullying in schools:
https://www/gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 states that:-

'All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

A failure to have necessary arrangements in place under section 175 may be grounds for the Secretary of State to take action against a Local Authority or Governing Body.'

The Local Perspective

This policy is part of the Children, Families and Cultural Services commitment to children and their families in Nottinghamshire as set out in the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2016-2018

The policy supports the following priorities
- Children and young people are safe in Nottinghamshire
- Children and young people are happy and healthy in Nottinghamshire
- Children and young people achieve their potential in Nottinghamshire
- Children, young people and families receive support when needed in Nottinghamshire

We can contribute to these priorities by:
- being aware that we all have a shared responsibility to work to prevent and tackle bullying of all kinds in order to protect the well-being of some of our most vulnerable young people,
- to promote stronger communities in which diversity is valued, and
- to ensure that all children and young people are protected.

Bullying is a behaviour choice and anyone can be encouraged to change their behaviour. We aim to encourage respect for differences and welcome diversity in our children, young people and in society in general, and believe our work should be inclusive of all.

We believe that children and young people should be actively involved in creating a safe environment and dealing with bullying is everyone's responsibility. They should actively participate in decisions that affect them and should be supported in taking responsibility for their choices and subsequent actions.

Responsibility for Anti-Bullying within Nottinghamshire County Council Children, Families and Cultural Services now sits within the Tackling Emerging Threats to Children (TETC) team.

The definition of bullying
In Nottinghamshire we continue to adopt the definition of bullying from the Anti-bullying Alliance:
The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace.
http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/about-us.aspx

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the Bystanders or Accessories.

Why are children and young people bullied?
Specific types of bullying include:
- prejudice related bullying of children with special educational needs or disabilities, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying or related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:
- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages

Discrimination and prejudiced based bullying

This policy also acknowledges that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:-

- ✓ age
- ✓ being or becoming a transsexual person
- ✓ being married or in a civil partnership
- ✓ being pregnant or having a child
- ✓ disability
- ✓ race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- ✓ religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- ✓ sex
- ✓ sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

These apply to our young people in the following situations:
At work
In education
As a consumer
When using public services

We will work with our colleagues in the county council and our partners in other areas such as health, the police, schools, academies and colleges to ensure these statutory obligations are met.

Cyberbullying and Inappropriate Online Behaviour

The rapid development of and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for bullying which can occur both in and out of school. This is a different form of bullying which can happen at any time, and with a potentially bigger audience. It is important that young people are taught how to keep themselves safe on line and to consider their own behaviour towards each other.

The Nottinghamshire Cybersurvey was published for Safer Internet Day 2016. It involved young people from the ages of 10-16. It found that 36% of young people spend more than 5 hours daily online. 21% had been cyberbullied.

Young people in the survey who said that they had been cyberbullied also showed evidence of other risky online behaviour. 11% of this group said they has been involved in sexting and 30% said they had seen websites in favour of religious extremism and terrorist acts. 26% of them said they had often visited pro-anorexia websites and 14% often visit websites encouraging self - harm or suicide. 28% said they had someone try to persuade them into sexual activity they did not want and over half (52%) have met up with someone they only knew online.

We will support children, young people and their families so we can help young people to make safer choices on line and so that those who are responsible for their safety are more aware of the risks in a constantly changing digital world.

Bullying and Mental Health, SEND and disability

The impact of bullying can be severe and long lasting because of the nature and extent of the bullying, or because it is combined with other factors affecting the social, mental and emotional health of the young person. This is true for the target and the young person displaying bullying behaviour. In some cases there may need to be a referral to Nottinghamshire Children's Trust Pathway to Provision by completing an Early Help Assessment Form EHAF or contacting the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/2292/pathway-to-provision-final-version.pdf

A referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) may also be useful. Government advice for schools around mental health and behaviour: (Department for Education

published June 2014 updated March 2016 cites bullying as one of the risk factors for child and adolescent mental health, with clear policies on behaviour and bullying being a protective factor in school)
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice

If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child or young person to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then schools may consider whether the child will benefit from being assessed for SEN.

While bullied children will not be routinely considered as requiring SEN support, we support the view that schools and local authorities should provide support in a proportionate and tailored way to meet individual needs. In the new SEN code of practice: 0-25 years considers that developing a graduated response to the varying levels of SEN among children and young people is the best way to offer support, and this can include the needs of bullied children
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Whilst the bullying itself may affect a child who may need short or longer term support as mentioned in the SEN code of practice, it is worth noting that we are aware that children with SEN/disability are amongst the most vulnerable in terms of experiencing bullying behaviour. Research conducted by Stella Chatzitheochari (University of Warwick) in collaboration with Sam Parsons (University College London) and Lucinda Platt (London School of Economics and Political Science) suggests that children and young people with disabilities are more likely to be bullied at school compared to those students with no known disabilities. These young people will be one of the priorities in the work of the TETC team.

How we will tackle bullying in Nottinghamshire
We will provide direction, leadership and operational support to all schools (including Academies, free schools and Independent schools) and to the wider community to ensure that all children and young people remain safe from bullying behaviour and have the opportunity to thrive and prosper, emotionally, socially and academically.

All children, young people and their families should feel confident that in all settings and in the digital world we are supporting them to create an environment in which bullying plays no part. We aim to work with young people to develop safe cooperative behaviour as well as an appreciation and respect for diversity. This will involve young people making decisions, and supporting each other where conflicts may emerge, especially when these conflicts involve vulnerable young people.

When a child or young person does encounter bullying we will ensure that the mechanisms are in place to allow them to:

- Report the incident and feel they have been listened to, and taken seriously
- Have it properly recorded so it can be monitored, appropriate action taken and followed up
- Feel that appropriate action has been taken

Current position

The post of Anti-bullying co-ordinator is now part of the Tackling Emerging Threats to Children (universal) team, and the post-holder is responsible for promoting anti-bullying work including online safety and cyberbullying. The team will work collaboratively to make sure that we keep up to date with all emerging threats including child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, and female genital mutilation.

We are an associate member of the Anti-Bullying Alliance. We are also working with Stonewall and are now recognised as one of the top 10 Local Authorities in the Stonewall Local Authority Index 2016 for our work to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people in Nottinghamshire.

The Anti-bullying policy and delivery plan will be part of the TETC (universal) delivery plan and will be informed by:
- the views of and feedback from children, young people and their families
- the analysis of data
- active engagement with other agencies including charities and voluntary groups
- working with young people and those who work with young people
- a focus on the particular needs of vulnerable groups
- emphasis on preventing as well as recognising and dealing with all emerging threats

National Guidance and Legislation
The Department for Education (DfE) has produced guidance for all schools including Academies and Free Schools which outlines its duties towards preventing and tackling bullying in schools:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sec 89)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/1

National Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. Some schools choose to include this information in an anti-bullying policy, whilst others include it in their behaviour policy. This must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents

Academies, Free Schools and Independent schools
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2962/pdfs/uksi_20122962_en.pdf

The Independent School Standards Regulations 2010 state that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

Bullying and Child Protection
Some incidents of bullying may also be a child protection issue. A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection issue under the Children Act 1989 when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. These concerns **must** be reported to the local authority's children's social care
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contentsl/

Discrimination - The Equality Act 2010
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
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. This covers incidents of Cyber bullying.
The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
The Malicious Communications Act 1988
The Communications Act 2003
The Public Order Act 1986

Organisations supporting Anti-bullying

Mencap – https://www.mencap.org.uk/

Mencap is a learning disability charity that provides information and support to children and adults with a learning disability, and to their families and carers.

Stonewall – www.stonewall.org.uk/

The lesbhttp://diana-award.org.uk/ian, gay, bisexual and transgender charity

Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) – www.eachaction.org.uk

EACH is a charity and training agency which helps people and organisations affected by homophobia. The website gives guidance, contact details and a free phone helpline.

School's Out – www.schools-out.org.uk/

The UK's safer internet centre- www.saferinterrnet.co.uk

Thinkuknow – https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Guide to internet safety and safe surfing for young people their families and professionals

Kidscape- https://www.kidscape.org.uk

Charity in the UK established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse.

The Diana Award – http://diana-award.org.uk/

Through the Diana Network and their anti-bullying and mentoring programmes, this charity encourages, empowers and engages young people to deal with bullying

Childline https://www.childline.org.uk/

Provides free and confidential help for young people in the UK.

NSPCC - www.nspcc.org.uk/

Child protection in sport- https://thecpsu.org.uk/

Young Minds - www.youngminds.org.uk

Committed to improving children's wellbeing and mental health

Family Lives - www.familylives.org.uk/

Parenting and family support from Family Lives (formerly Parentline Plus) through their website, online chat, helpline 0808 800 2222 and parenting classes.

Show Racism the red card - www.theredcard.org/

The campaign that uses top footballers to educate against racism.

Mermaids - www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/

A support group for gender variant children and teenagers, and their families.

Gires - www.gires.org.uk/

Information for transgender people, their families and the professionals who care for them

Sports Nottinghamshire - www.sportnottinghamshire.co.uk/

Represents the County Sports Partnership (CSP) for the city and county of Nottinghamshire. CSPs are networks of organisations working in sport and active recreation, including, Local Authorities, National Governing Bodies of Sport, Schools, Colleges and Universities, Professional Sports Clubs and Public Health.