Medway
COUNCIL
Serving You

CABINET

29 MARCH 2011

COUNTERING BULLYING

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Les Wicks, Children's Services

Report from: Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults

Author: Zoe Barkham, Wellbeing Strategy Manager

Teri Reynolds, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator

Summary

This report provides Members with a background to countering bullying in Medway and information on the work and findings of the countering bullying task group. It also details the findings of the Children and Young People (CYP) Overview and Scrutiny Committee themed meeting on countering bullying held on 1 March 2011.

The CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed that this topic be considered as part of a themed meeting following concerns that Medway's response from children and young people, reporting experiences of bullying at school, represented a significantly less positive outcome compared to the national and statistical neighbours' results (52%, 46% and 46% respectively).

1.   Budget and Policy Framework

1.1   Local authorities have a duty to keep children safe. Actions to mitigate bullying incidents and experience for children and young people (CYP) in Medway are consistent with the aims outlines in the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011 and the Council Plan 2011-12.

1.2   There are specific references to bullying in the recent White Paper, 'the importance of teaching' and the subsequent Education Bill, which state that the government will expect head teachers to take a strong stand against bullying (particularly prejudice-based racist, sexist and homophobic bullying) and enhance the focus of Ofsted inspections on behaviour and safety, including bullying, as one of four key areas of inspection.

1.3   Medway has an anti-bullying and harassment policy and guidelines, which are attached at Appendix A.

2. Background

2.1 TellUs4 Survey outcomes

2.1.1 The Tell Us survey was a nationally funded survey, which was conducted on-line in schools with year 6, 8, and 10 pupils and asked CYP their views on issues covering the whole of the Every Child Matters agenda. The survey was carried out in October – November 2009 and the results were reported in 2010.

2.1.2 The TellUs4 Survey was the last one to be conducted and the findings for Medway were reported to the Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee (now the CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee) in 2010. The results in relation to bullying raised some concern for the committee and were as follows: -
- 27% of CYP said they often worried about being bullied, compared with 25% nationally;
- Children in Year 6 were more likely to worry about being bullied (35%) than young people in Year 10 (20%) and were more likely to say they had been bullied at some point in their lives both in school (57%) and out of school (27%);
- Overall 52% of CYP said they had been bullied whilst at school and 22% said this happened out of school;
- Year 10 young people were more likely to report being bullied in the last year out of school (40%) than in school (21%);
- Disabled CYP who had been bullied were more likely to report being bullied at school in the last four weeks (18%) and less likely to report being bullied more than a year ago (42%) compared to overall (16% and 48% respectively);
- Disabled CYP were also less likely to report bullying out of school in the last four week period (17%) and less likely to report being bullied more than a year ago (23%) compared to overall (23% and 27% respectively);
- CYP who were of Asian/Asian British and Black/Black British origin were less likely to say they had been bullied at some point in their lives both at school (43% and 49% respectively) and out of school (13% each) compared to CYP overall (52% and 22% respectively);
- CYP who had been bullied at school were more likely to have negative perceptions of their school's ability to deal with bullying (32%), than those overall (26%).

2.1.3 Medway's response from CYP concerning their experiences of bullying at school represented a significantly less positive outcome compared to the national and statistical neighbours' results (52%, 46% and 46% respectively).

2.1.4 Following the publication of these results, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to hold a themed meeting on countering bullying and also set up a task group of Members to carry out some preparatory work for this meeting. The work and findings of this group are detailed below at paragraph 4 and the outcome of the themed meeting held on 1 March 2011 is detailed at paragraph 6.

2.1.5 The scope for the meeting was set as follows: -
   a) To identify models of best practice;
   b) To check that Medway schools are operating policies and procedures in accordance with best practice identified to prevent and resolve bullying incidents;
   c) To investigate further the experiences of young people with countering bullying in Medway;
   d) To investigate what actions have been taken to reduce the number of young people experiencing bullying both in and out of school since the outcome of the TellUs Survey;
   e) To investigate the impact of the strengthened powers for teachers proposed in the Government's White Paper, 'the importance of teaching', in relation to countering bullying and bad behaviour.

2.2   <u>What is bullying?</u>

2.2.1 The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) includes the following principles in its definition of bullying:
   - bullying behaviour deliberately causes hurt (either physically or emotionally);
   - bullying behaviour is repetitive (though one off incidents such as the posting of an image, or the sending of a text that is then forwarded to a group, can quickly become repetitive and spiral into bullying behaviour);
   - bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power (the person on the receiving end feels like they can not defend themselves).

2.2.2 It is important to understand that bullying is not:
   - teasing and banter between friends without intention to cause hurt;
   - falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement;
   - behaviour that all parties have consented to and enjoy (although coercion can be very subtle).

2.2.3 There are various types of bullying, which include: -
   - Physical bullying – when someone is hit, punched, pushed or have their personal items stolen and any other kind of physical, aggressive contact;
   - Verbal bullying – when someone is called names, threatened and made to feel bad;
   - Social bullying – when someone is left out of games, deliberately ignored and has bad things spread about them and made to feel like an outsider
   - Psychological/mental bullying – when a someone is stalked or intimidated;
   - Cyber bullying – This type of bullying can be being nasty via chat rooms, online, instant messaging, posts on social networking sites, on a mobile phone or even e-mails.

2.3   <u>The national picture</u>

2.3.1 Nationally there has been a recent move towards giving anti-bullying work a higher profile. As noted above there are likely to be specific

requirements for schools to engage with bullying and it will be given more emphasis in the forthcoming Ofsted framework.

2.3.2 Members are advised that there have been concerns raised nationally over the TellUs statistics. These are principally related to the nature of the questions, which were not phrased in the same way year-on-year, and which did not offer a standard definition of what was meant by "bullying". The results for Medway should therefore be treated with a degree of caution. The TellUs Survey ceased in 2010. This was partly due to the cost of carrying out the survey but also because some Local Authorities did not participate.

2.3.3 Although there are no formal statistics available, experience here and in other local authorities would suggest that the biggest growth in incidents of bullying is with cases of cyberbullying. There are particular issues with parents who have been using social networking sites to accuse children or staff of bullying.

2.3.4 In schools, the principal mechanism for delivering anti-bullying work was the National Healthy Schools Standard. This is now being changed to a much smaller programme that schools can choose to engage with on a local rather than a national level.

3.   Medway Council's role in countering bullying

3.1   A child whose emotional health is being affected (whether by bullying or any other issue) is physiologically unable to engage fully with education. To reflect this, Medway's anti-bullying lead sits within the Health for Learning Team as part of the Inclusion division. The Health for Learning Team offers support, training and resources for schools to help them ensure that all CYP are emotionally and physically able to learn and socialise. They build on the work initiated under the National Healthy Schools Standard, which had been achieved by 90% of Medway schools before the programme was localised.

3.2   There are three principal strands to Medway's anti-bullying work:

3.2.1 <u>Dedicated anti-bullying lead</u> – this officer works directly with schools and families. Her role is:

- To advise and guide schools on best practice and to advise families on how to deal with cases as they arise.   This includes ensuring that anti-bullying policies are up to date, and cover all forms of bullying, as well as helping them to deal effectively and quickly with incidents. Families often need help with approaching a school about a suspected case of bullying, or with understanding that their child is not actually being bullied but is in fact having a normal playground falling-out.

- To act as a neutral arbiter between schools and families. Accusations of bullying can be very emotive and where relationships and trust break down it can be very difficult to understand and address the situation effectively. The officer provides a mechanism whereby communication can be established

and all parties can feel that they are being listened to and supported.

- To lead restorative and mediation practices within schools. The officer is qualified to facilitate restorative justice meetings, which are used to bring bully and victim together so that the victim can express his or her feelings about what has happened. Both parties then decide on appropriate restitution, with priority being given to the victim's wishes.

3.2.2   Emotional First Aid – three members of the Health for Learning team are licensed to deliver this work, which aims to prevent emotional distress from escalating into long-term problems. CYP who have experienced bullying may need help to overcome the emotional problems it can cause – for instance, restoring self-esteem and improving their confidence.

No child is born a bully. CYP who bully do so as a result of some form of emotional disturbance and the programme can help them to identify and rectify the root cause of their behaviour. For example they may be witnessing domestic violence and thus form the belief that disagreements are always solved through the use of force.

Many factors can make a child vulnerable to bullying – disability, their family life, their appearance – and emotional first aid can help them to develop skills and strategies to improve their resilience. The programme is also effective with children who are beginning to show signs of emotional distress that may escalate into bullying.

3.2.3   E-safety – as noted above, cyberbullying is a growing area of concern. The Health for Learning team delivers a variety of e-safety training sessions to pupils, families and teachers. All key stages can receive training. This emphasises the need for safe and responsible online behaviour and teaches children how to report problems to the appropriate authority. Over 3000 children in Medway have been trained.

A further concern is the numbers of children who are playing violent, adult-themed games online. Many primary children are regular players of games rated 18. During a recent e-safety session, around half of the children being trained said they played these games and most of them said it was with parental permission. Many said they were only allowed to play if their dad or an older sibling played the game with them.

4.   Countering Bullying Task Group

4.1.   The group met five times where they discussed bullying issues with officers, met with external experts that could not attend the meeting itself and discussed some aspects of the themed meeting, such as who should be invited and how the meeting should run.

4.2   The initial meetings of the group gave the Members an opportunity to meet with the Assistant Director for Inclusion, the Wellbeing Strategy Manager and the lead on anti-bullying to understand the broad legal

framework for providing support to schools and families in relation to bullying incidents and the role of the Council in that, which is explained in sections 2 and 3 of this report.

4.3   The group then visited Glencoe Junior School, who had done some excellent work on raising awareness about anti-bullying services, where pupils could go to discuss their problems, offering a number of options for that. There were anti-bullying posters around the school and the school council performed a short production, identifying different types of bullying and what students could do about it.

4.4   The group also met with the Regional Co-ordinator from the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA), which was under the umbrella of the National Children's Bureau. The ABA worked with the Department for Education on guidance documents and was involved in the development of the White Paper on education, in relation to behaviour.

4.5   The ABA also supported local authorities (LAs), providing a knowledge base and good practice information. Regional meetings are held and targeted support is provided for LAs who had scored poorly against the NI 69 (children who have experienced bullying) and the TellUs Survey. Medway did not fall within this category and therefore does not receive this targeted support.

4.6   The group discussed with the Regional Co-ordinator how schools would implement the stronger powers, which were included in the white paper and Education Bill for Headteachers and teachers, in relation to managing behaviour. She explained that Headteachers would need to take a stronger stance against bullying, a clear policy which is shared with students, staff and parents and would need to be supported by their governing bodies. Ofsted were also likely to take a higher interest into behaviour management, which was expected to be reflected in its new framework that was currently being developed.

4.7   Discussions also took place in relation to cyber bullying. The Regional Co-ordinator explained that CYP needed to be trained to know how to react to cyber bullying, the key issue being not to respond. She also referred to valuable material from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre which provided a website, www.thinkuknow.co.uk, giving advice and guidance on how to be safe on the Internet. This forms the basis of materials delivered by the Health for Learning Team.

5.   Key findings of the task group

5.1   <u>Data collection</u>

5.1.1   Schools are encouraged to record and monitor incidents of bullying and bad behaviour along with intervention methods used. Medway schools are encouraged to provide this information to the local authority in order for the Health for Learning Team to provide support that school/student where required.

5.1.2   School Information Management Systems (SIMS) is an online system that schools use to record pupil data. Within SIMS there is a behaviour

module, which can be used to record and monitor incidents of bullying, as well as intervention actions. Schools are encouraged by ABA to use this as a way of monitoring poor behaviour, bullying incidents and how the school is managing incidents along with success rates of intervention methods and patterns for particular pupils so further investigations into that child's life can be made to understand if there is an issue at school or at home which is resulting in the students poor behaviour.

5.1.3 It is difficult to form an accurate impression of what systems schools in Medway use as they are under no obligation to report on numbers and types of incidents (other than incidents of racism).

5.2 Cyber bullying

5.2.1 Cyber bullying has nationally become a very difficult issue since the introduction and ever growing popularity of social networking sites such as bebo and facebook. At least two of Medway schools had received training from beatbullying, who had trained some students to be Cyber mentors, providing support for peers who had experienced cyber-bullying problems.

5.2.2 The ABA Regional Co-ordinator explained that there was a lot of training available to young people to provide them with the skills on dealing with cyber bullying, as well as other types of bullying. The biggest message in relation to cyber bullying was for the victim to not respond.

5.2.3 Please see paragraph 3.2.3 above for more information on how Medway addresses issues around cyberbullying.

5.2.4 The group also met with a representative from the Medway Youth Parliament who explained that cyber bullying was relatively easy to deal with for those who were confident to do so as you could choose not to respond, print the page showing the comments made and report it to the person's school or if necessary, the police. However, he added that a new application on the facebook website, called formspring, enabled people to post comments anonymously. This meant identifying the author was far more difficult and therefore the issue could not be addressed through methods of restorative justice or other ways of involving the bully. Users can choose to block anonymous messages but the system's default is to allow them.

5.2.5 To date the Wellbeing Team have not received any complaints regarding the use of the site "Little Gossip" on which users can post derogatory and anonymous rumours about school mates. A similar site, "Rate My Teacher" allows comments to be made about school staff. A growing concern relates to parental use of Facebook to name and comment on school staff; where this takes place on private profiles (ie those that cannot be viewed without permission) there is little that can be done to report or remove content.

5.2.6 Although school filters do not allow access to these sites via school systems, it is easy for CYP to reach them via mobile phones with web access.

5.2.7 Cyberbullying is particularly pernicious as it allows a bully 24 hour access to a victim, and comments and images are impossible to retrieve once posted. Victims thus have to live with the knowledge that the bullying content is going to be available forever.

5.3 <u>School ethos</u>

5.3.1 A positive school ethos which has a zero tolerance attitude to all types of bullying is very important in ensuring students feel safe, feel able to report incidents and in reducing the number of bullying incidents within the establishment.

5.3.2 The task group's visit to Glencoe Junior School demonstrated to them how powerful a positive ethos could be in tackling bullying and promoting a cohesive school community.

5.3.3 In addition, the group received a report from Stonewall (a lesbian, gay and bisexual charity) about experiences of young gay people in Britain's schools and it states in the report that, "lesbian and gay pupils are more likely to feel positive about school if their school has explicitly stated that homophobic bullying is against the rules. Less than a quarter of young gay people have been told that homophobic bullying is wrong in their school. In schools that have said homophobic bullying is wrong, gay young people are 60% more likely not to have been bullied". This shows how important it is for any bullying and inappropriate behaviour to be considered openly unacceptable by the staff and for that message to be passed on clearly to all students and members of the school community.

5.3.4 It is crucial that school staff model good anti-bullying behaviour. A school where bullying is part of the staff-room culture will not be able to deal effectively with bullying amongst the pupils. For instance, a school where teachers use homophobic language amongst themselves is probably one that fails to prevent homophobic bullying amongst children.

5.4 <u>Ideas for a good anti-bullying policy</u>

5.4.1 Both local authorities and schools/colleges/work places etc should have anti-bullying policies. The task group discussed with the Regional Co-ordinator from the ABA what a good policy should include and the following suggestions were made: -
- All different types of bullying should be identified;
- A clear definition of bullying should be included;
- The three key aspects of a bully should be listed:
  - Intentional,
  - Repeated over time,
  - Imbalance of power;
- Clear methods to record and monitor bullying incidents;
- Intervention actions and their impact should also be recorded;

- Clear communication systems should be explained: -
  - Who deals with what, when and how,
  - What time is created to listen,
  - What time is created to talk generally to students about countering bullying,
  - How are parents informed of incidents and intervention actions.

5.4.2   In addition, it was explained that staff should be clear on how they can support children to discuss problems, for example, reduced attendance, poor body language, and lowered attainment.

5.4.3   The policy must also be active and easy to access for students, staff and parents. The policy should be consulted on with students (via school council) and parents and information on the policy should be included in school prospectuses, along with a clear complaints procedure.

5.4.4   Strong and clear anti-bullying policies, along with a robust complaints procedure, will become even more important when strengthened powers come into place for headteachers and teachers in relation to managing behaviour. Ofsted will also focus more on behaviour and school policies and actions to prevent bullying. The role of governing bodies in relation to schools anti-bullying and behaviour policies and complaints procedures will therefore also become more important.

5.5   <u>Long term actions and interventions</u>

5.5.1   Dealing with the root cause of bullying behaviour is vital if the problem is to be eradicated. Simply excluding a child without addressing his or her underlying motivation only moves the problem elsewhere, and encourages the child to retain the bullying attitude into adulthood.

5.5.2   To deal effectively with bullying, schools must have mechanisms in place to:
- Identify early warning signs that a child is developing bullying behaviour or is being bullied, and to intervene before the situation becomes entrenched;
- Identify children whose background may make them more vulnerable to becoming either a perpetrator or victim;
- Put in place systems (such as Emotional First Aid) that can prevent the problem developing into something worse, and minimise the harmful effects of bullying;
- Have effective referral systems for those children whose behaviour or background requires specialist intervention, for instance from the Family Intervention Project or the On Side therapy service.

5.6   <u>Conclusions</u>

5.6.1   The key findings detailed above all fit within the aims identified in the scope of the meeting detailed in paragraph 2.1.5 above.

- *To identify models of best practice* - all of the findings highlight areas of best practice in the role of local authorities and schools in relation to raising awareness of anti-bullying and how bullying

issues should be managed. The ABA provided some helpful key points to include in anti-bullying policies and the visit to Glencoe Junior School displayed good techniques to raise awareness in school and encourage a cohesive school community. Other examples that were suggested at the themed meeting (detailed below) included effective communication and signposting with CYP and supporting teachers and school staff to effectively tackle bullying incidents and promote and embed anti-bullying ethos within a school community.

- *To check that Medway schools are operating policies and procedures in accordance with best practice identified to prevent and resolve bullying incidents* – The dedicated anti-bullying lead has been working with secondary schools to audit their anti-bullying policies against the ABA audit attached at Appendix 2 to the report. This ensures that their policies are in line with recognised best practice and where they have not been then the anti-bullying lead has been able to advise on how to achieve this. All secondary schools in Medway have been audited and officers are now working with primary schools to help ensure their anti-bullying policies are also inline with best practice.

- *To investigate further the experiences of young people with countering bullying in Medway* – the task group have heard of experiences and how they are dealt with from officers and the committee also asked CYP at the meeting for their views on how bullying can be prevented and addressed, which is detailed at section 6.

- *To investigate what actions have been taken to reduce the number of young people experiencing bullying both in and out of school since the outcome of the TellUs Survey* – following the survey the authority has appointed the dedicated anti-bullying lead to work directly with schools and families and the work of this role is summarised above. This has enabled schools to access support and guidance from the authority and ABA and other organisations to help raise awareness of anti-bullying and work towards reducing the experiences of bullying for young people in Medway. The task group also found that the results from the TellUs Survey were considered somewhat unreliable (as set out in paragraph 2.3.2) and other indicators of bullying incidents such as Ofsted reports, did not portray the same high figures of bullying experiences among young people.

- *To investigate the impact of the strengthened powers for teachers proposed in the Government's Schools White Paper in relation to countering bullying and bad behaviour* – the task group's meeting with the ABA discussed how schools might implement this as detailed above at paragraph 4.6.

6.   Themed meeting – 1 March 2011

6.1   The CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee held a themed meeting on 1 March 2011 to discuss issues around countering bullying and to discuss the findings of the task group, detailed above.

6.2   Representatives from the following groups gave brief introductions about their organisation and its role, as well as their views in relation to countering bullying: -

- Beatbullying – carry out campaigning and work with schools and in youth settings, provide peer and cyber mentoring courses;
- Bigfoot Education Arts – provide drama workshops to schools, helping students to understand different types of bullying and to have empathy for both the victims and the bullies;
- JustDifferent – talk to CYP about disability, focussing on the positives of being different;
- Local Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) – work closely with school Family Liaison Officers (FLO), Student Advocates, Peer Mentors and other colleagues that can provide support and advice.
- Medway Mediation Service – train CYP to be mediators, which proves to be empowering and teaches empathy, responsibility for actions and to find resolutions. In addition, it provides restorative justice conferencing, a powerful tool in bringing together the victim and bully in order to understand hurt caused and provide closure;
- Show Racism the Red Card – provide advice in schools through workshops or physical activity sessions, such as football to educate students in understanding what racism is and why it is wrong. Also provides teacher-training to hep with engagement in racism issues;
- Glencoe Junior School – The school's anti-bullying lead explained that historically the school had some challenges with bullying but now had a strong ethos on anti-bullying. The school's council provide assemblies relating to racism, children's rights and all types of bullying, which empower students. There were various ways in which children could report problems, such as approaching various staff, using a post box in the school or sending an email. Parents were confident in speaking to staff about incidents and in the school's ethos and procedures in addressing bullying. Some pupils added that bullies should be shown the pain they cause victims and understand the consequences. Whole school communities need to learn and understand body language and to listen;
- Sir Joseph Williamson Mathematic School – a student gave his view that culture in a school was key in tackling bullying. He felt there was not a significant problem with bullying in his school because of its strong culture discipline and addressing issues;
- Medway Youth Parliament – A representative raised concern about cyber-bullying, particularly in relation to a new application on facebook called 'formspring', which enabled users to leave anonymous comments. She added that many CYP were unsure of where to go for help and advice on specific types of bullying;
- Place2Be – currently based in some primary schools providing a therapeutic and counselling service for children. Look beyond behaviour as often bullies are also victims and often have self-esteem issues. It was hoped this service would be expanded into

other schools, including secondary schools, as often some year 7 CYP experienced issues following transition from primary school.

6.3   The Members of the Countering Bullying Task Group then fed back to the Committee. They commented that Glencoe Junior School was an example of best practice as they had faced the problem of bullying and embedded a culture of respect, sharing problems and listening, as well as supporting students and the Members encouraged other schools to follow its example. They added that School Governors needed to be fully aware and supportive of their school's anti-bullying policy

6.4   Members then asked a number of questions to officers and external representatives, which included: -

- *JustDifferent, do you provide support in mainstream schools?*
  The charity provided schools with support to teach CYP to respect those that appear different. Sometimes the reception at the beginning of a visit could be difficult but once a dialogue had been established some good questions were asked.

- *Show Racism the Red Card, can you expand on how you educate ignorance?*
  Racism comes through ignorance, which is often borne from lack of experience of diversity. CYP were taught to delve under the stereotypes of racism and be critical. Football is one engagement vehicle used with ex-professional footballers, in order to gain a captive audience to then give the message.

- *What would be good and effective ways of communicating with CYP and sign-posting to various organisations?*
  A PCSO explained that leaflets or contact cards would be discarded and suggested that communication through posters, downloads and bluetooth were more effective in reaching CYP with information. In addition, the Director of Children and Adult Services explained that whatever communication methods were used, they needed to be affordable and sustainable in order for them to continue to be provided and used for generations of CYP to come.

- *Are we working well with GPs to pick up on possible issues relating to bullying or other emotional wellbeing difficulties?*
  Medway Mediation explained that they did receive a fairly large number of referrals from GPs to their service. In addition, the Director of Children and Adult Services explained that GPs would be becoming more involved with commissioning of services and a GP representative also sat on the Medway Safeguarding Children Board so undertook to feedback the importance of GP referrals and sign-posting where it is felt incidents of bullying may be occurring.

- *Do Youth Workers also feed back to schools etc if there are bullying concerns?*
  The Assistant Director, Inclusion explained that Youth Workers provide safeguarding supports and were beginning to work in schools to enable more opportunities for sharing information with schools and vice versa.

- *Is it possible to record whether CYP who have experienced bullying incidents feel their issue was resolved?*
  Officers confirmed that schools were asked for this information as part of the statistics the Council tried to collect from schools, however, many CYP who are approached for feedback after an incident do not want to discuss the past event so getting their views was difficult. Officers were currently asking school councils to consider ways of doing this differently to achieve more information on what works well.

- *How can we intervene and provide support early enough to avoid issues of bullying and bad behaviour to continue and escalate?*
  It was explained that it is important to engage all CYP and for them to understand the consequences and the harm that is caused from bullying. Bigfoot Education Arts explained that the workshops they run included four characters, the by-stander, the bully, the victim and the teacher. It investigates why the bully is bullying and find that, in many cases, they are actually being bullied themselves. It therefore provides CYP with the social awareness needed to address and understand bullying issues.

- *What can the local authority do to support partners?*
  Various representatives from the external organisations explained that education of all teachers and school staff was important in ensuring they had core knowledge and understanding of anti-bullying issues. Ongoing raised awareness of anti-bullying was also a key factor. It was suggested that schools would benefit from a simple directory of contacts that could be used for resources or advice in relation to addressing various anti-bullying issues. Officers also explained that workshops for teachers had been run, in partnership with Kidscape, to raise awareness of all types of bullying and how to address issues. Another suggestion included school's having a lead person with responsibility for countering bullying and for them to be provided with sufficient time to effectively carry out such duties.

6.5 Other comments raised during the debate included: -
- Concern when schools do not recognise that a bullying problem exists, most people felt that all schools have bullying in their schools;
- Important to understand the difference between bullying and what is 'friendly banter';
- Reference to bullying being reflective of what could be happening in a child or young person's home environment should be included in the policy;
- Schools should record all incidents, interventions and outcomes;
- Different methods of training teachers and governors in best practice ways of addressing bullying should be explored;
- The culture of schools in countering bullying is key and needs to be open, enabling people to feel safe, providing a range of ways for students to share their problems and ask for support;
- Clarification of confidentiality when addressing bullying incidents;

- Ofsted would be providing a new framework later in the year which would cover four key areas, one of which would focus on behaviour;
- PCSOs try to educate CYP to report incidents as witnesses;
- Information to be provided to Councillors with useful contacts in order to sign post concerned parents, carers and CYP if approached with bullying concerns.

7. Director's comments

7.1 We welcome the report from the Member Task Group and the recommendations from both that and the themed meeting. Measures to counter bullying are very important to children and young people in Medway as bullying is an issue that concerns them greatly. Members have been able to hear evidence on the range of anti-bullying support available in Medway and to understand some of the challenges involved in addressing this issue in schools and other settings. In both the Task Group and the themed meeting Councillors have seen examples of excellent practice and heard the views of children and young people, together with those of anti-bullying agencies.

7.2 The report acknowledges that there may be a gap in perception between what adults may describe as bullying and the wider range of experiences as reported by children and young people. In particular, the report describes new forms of bullying through the use of technology. Bullying on the grounds of race, disability, gender and sexual orientation are also seen to be problems facing young people, not just in Medway but across the UK.

7.3 In Medway there are strong links to organisations that can assist schools and other settings when dealing with and preventing bullying. We are initiating a collaborative approach with these partners and with children and young people to ensure that reviews of policy and practice reflect what they want and need. To this end we will be consulting with School Councils and other representative groups to capture the opinions and ideas of these important stakeholders.

7.4 Shifts in national policy focus will affect the way schools in particular address bullying; we await the new Ofsted framework, which will have a new emphasis on how schools prevent it. Our continued commitment to the mental health of children and young people will be an equally important strand to taking our anti-bullying work forward.

8. Risk Management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Lack of co-operation from schools	The move to Academy status means that many schools may have less engagement with the Authority	Health for Learning services are offered as a traded service to Academies; other support such as the Anti-Bullying Alliance is available.
Lack of funding	Budgetary restraints may affect the level of assistance and support available to schools	

9. Implications for looked after children

9.1 All recommendations in this report will have an equal impact on LAC. There are no statistics for Medway which indicate that LAC are at greater risk of bullying but they are more vulnerable to emotional distress and to risk-taking behaviour. Implementing the recommendations listed below will offer protection to all children, including LAC. However, the school's designated teacher for LAC should be made familiar with signs of bullying and always consider it as a possibility in relation to the LAC within their school, acting proactively to prevent its occurrence.

10. Financial and legal implications

10.1 Medway Council has a legal obligation to ensure the safety of children and staff attending its schools. There are also obligations to promote equality with regard to gender, race, and disability. Effectively countering bullying is one way in which these obligations can be met.

10.2 Failing to successfully address bullying could lead to payments of compensation to victims. There is also evidence that effective investment in a child's early years can prevent the need to spend greater amounts when he or she grows up.

11. Recommendations

11.1 The Cabinet are recommended to agree that Medway's anti-bullying and Harassment Policy and Guidelines (attached at Appendix A) be updated in line with the key findings identified above and revised as and when appropriate and legislation is enacted to be compliant with: -
   - the references to behaviour and discipline as outlined in the Education Bill 2011;
   - the forthcoming Ofsted framework which is being amended to reflect the new powers relating to behaviour.

11.2 The Cabinet are recommended to agree officers continue to encourage schools to work in partnership with the Council in relation to access anti-bullying support and guidance.

11.3 The Cabinet are recommended to agree that schools are encouraged to allocate time and resources in adopting methods of good practice in relation to countering bullying, such as having a countering bullying champion;

11.4 The Cabinet are recommended to agree that officers consider ways of promoting the use of technology to broadcast the message around countering bullying.

12. Reasons for decisions

12.1 Countering bullying for CYP in Medway is key and falls within the Council's strategic priority, 'CYP having the best start in life'.

12.2 The Government's Education Bill, if enacted, has clear references to managing behaviour, of which part of that is countering bullying in schools. Therefore an updated anti-bullying policy will be key in promoting good practice and supporting all schools to adopt such methods.

Lead officer contact:

Zoe Barkham, Wellbeing Strategy Manager
Tel: (01634) 331038   Email: zoe.barkham@medway.gov.uk

Teri Reynolds, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Tel: (01634) 332104   Email: teri.reynolds@medway.gov.uk

Background papers

TellUs4 Survey – The results and analysis of those were reported to the Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 May 2010 and can be viewed at:
http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=4797&nobdr=2

Medway Anti bullying and Harassment Policy and Guidelines

Listen Listen Listen

Foreword by Cllr Les Wicks, Portfolio Holder, Education

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to be endorsing this Medway Anti bullying and Harassment Policy. Bullying is an issue which is high on the agenda for us all – parents, teachers, pupils and Medway Councillors. When a child is being bullied the effects can be far-reaching and unquantifiable. There will be distress but we may see signs of school avoidance, loss of concentration, poor results and other changes in behaviour.

It is a requirement for all schools to now have a policy which clearly sets out their strategies for preventing and responding to bullying behaviours. This Medway policy aims to help schools with that duty.

This policy is an updated version of the previous document. It contains guidance which I hope that our schools will find helpful. It reminds us all that Bullying is an endemic social factor so that we all need to be vigilant and proactive in ensuring it has minimal impact on our young people. No school can say that Bullying never occurs and I hope that this guidance will support those who are dealing with the issue on a daily basis.

I am happy that here in Medway we are taking a proactive approach to this topic. Bullying will never go away but together in schools we can reduce the instances and the long term impact by our responses to the 'perpetrator' and the 'victim'.

All best wishes

Les Wicks
Portfolio Holder, Education

Listen Listen Listen

Medway Anti bullying and Harassment Policy and Guidelines

| **Contents** | **Page** |

Tell Tell Tell

Listen Listen Listen

MEDWAY ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY GUIDELINES

Summary for Headteachers

It is the headteacher who has the pivotal role in ensuring that the school fulfils its legal obligations and that anti-bullying and anti harassment procedures are developed and followed within the school. This summary may be a helpful tool within the 'self evaluation' context.

Responsibilities

➢ To ensure that the school has a policy on equal opportunities and anti-bullying which encompasses measures specific to harassment, including racial harassment.

➢ To ensure that the anti-bullying/harassment policy is known to all staff, to pupils, parents and governors; maintain it as high profile and ensure it is well known to the whole school community.

➢ To ensure that the procedures set out in the policy are carried out consistently and fairly by staff.

➢ To ensure that systems are in place for monitoring instances of bullying and harassment and the effectiveness of the policy.

➢ To report to governors at least once a term about the situation with regard to bullying and harassment and to inform them of the measures in place within school for combating them.

➢ To ensure that all school staff have the opportunity to receive training on appropriate methods of dealing with incidents of bullying and harassment (e.g. Restorative Justice, Peer Mediation).

➢ That the curriculum is sufficient and suitable to cover the issues around bullying and harassment.

➢ To establish systems which are perceived as supportive by pupils who are involved in incidents ('victims' and 'bullies'). Parents will need to be kept informed of the school response.

➢ To ensure that the ethos within school allows pupils to feel that it is 'safe' to tell and where they have the confidence to believe that school will deal effectively with incidents brought to their attention.

Strategies may include

➢ Involve the school community in writing the school policy on equal opportunities and anti-bullying and when reviewing it.

➢ Have a simple summary that is easily accessible to parents and available in community languages as appropriate.

➢ Use display material that promotes diversity and equal opportunities.

Listen Listen Listen

➢ Use whole school events to promote mutual respect and to highlight the values expressed by the anti-bullying policy
➢ Involve the pupils in devising systems for the playground which minimise the potential for conflict.
➢ Ensure that support assistants and mid day meal supervisors are regarded as staff with high status by the pupils.
➢ Have a forum (e.g. school council) where it is possible for pupils to participate in the discussions and the decision making processes about appropriate responses to bullying and about preventative measures.
➢ Display agreed codes of conduct prominently in class and around the school.
➢ Have appropriate resources readily available for staff and ensure that materials to be used with pupils are timetabled so that they have different experiences each year.
➢ Have procedures in place for logging incidents, which are easy to understand, and simple to use.
➢ Organise regular sessions in school where all adults, particularly those new to the school can share information on the equal opportunities policy and the bullying policy with a view to developing an informed and consistent approach across the school.
➢ Ensure that the school has a named co-ordinator with responsibility for anti-bullying and anti harassment initiatives within the school. Ideally this person should be part of the Senior Management team, as they need to be perceived as high status by the rest of the staff. This person should also have appropriate training.
➢ Appoint a governor with responsibility for positive behaviour.

Listen Listen Listen

MEDWAY ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI HARASSMENT POLICY GUIDELINES

Summary for Governors

Governors have an important role in ensuring that the school fulfils its legal obligations with respect to anti-bullying, anti harassment and anti racist policies and procedures. The governors have a responsibility to ensure that procedures undertaken in school are monitored and are effective.

Responsibilities

➢ Ensuring that the school's equal opportunities and behaviour policy make reference to the different forms of bullying and harassment.
➢ Ensure that the curriculum provides planned opportunities for pupils to discuss issues relevant to anti-bullying and equality of opportunities generally.
➢ To ensure that staff receive appropriate relevant training to enable policies to be effectively implemented.
➢ To ensure that they are aware of any patterns of bullying and persistent parental complaints.
➢ To ensure that incidents are monitored and if appropriate policies and procedures are reviewed.
➢ To ensure that parents are informed of the school's anti-bullying policy and where appropriate are consulted within any review process.
➢ To support the headteacher in implementing school policy.

Strategies

➢ To become familiar with and clear about the school's current position on anti bullying anti harassment and equal opportunities.
➢ To attend training opportunities for governors on these issues.
➢ To clarify the pupil's position in implementing the policy.
➢ Where necessary to help to establish an action plan to review policy and procedures.
➢ To support the headteacher in establishing appropriate mechanisms for monitoring incidents.
➢ To help the headteacher identify ways of disseminating the policy to pupils and to parents.
➢ Establish a clearly communicated mechanism by which parents can communicate concerns with the school and to the governors. Such concerns will need to be responded to.

Listen Listen Listen

MEDWAY ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY GUIDELINES

Summary for teachers

The role of the teacher is crucial in implementing the school's anti-bullying and behaviour policy. The classroom ethos, which they establish, will ensure that equality of opportunity and anti discrimination works in practice.

Responsibilities

- Ensuring that they know the content of the equal opportunities and anti-bullying policy.
- Ensuring that training opportunities are taken up.
- To be sensitive the possibility of bullying and harassment and dealing with all incidents in a consistent manner in line with the school's guidelines including the logging and reporting procedures used in the school.
- Ensuring that the beliefs and values underpinning equal opportunities and anti-bullying are reflected within the classroom environment and the curriculum.
- Be aware of the cultural and social diversity and the beliefs of students in the class in order to be aware of comments and or behaviour, which could be offensive to particular individuals or specific groups of pupils.
- Manage behaviour in a way that is seen by the pupils as fair and which models respect for the individual.

Strategies

- Involve students in drawing up ground rules for class behaviour.
- Display agreed codes of conduct prominently within the class.
- Have regular opportunities for whole class and or small group discussion where the topic of bullying and harassment is raised and all pupils are encouraged and supported to give their views and express their feelings. It is important to create a climate where it is safe and acceptable to 'tell'. Circle time is one established way where this may be accomplished.
- Consider at the planning stage of any topic how equal opportunity issues can be promoted. Become aware of which resources available within the school can support this. Where appropriate deal with instances of bullying and harassment explicitly through the curriculum.
- Use of display materials within the classroom and around the school can help to promote positive values.
- Use discussion and curriculum opportunities to discuss the role of the 'bystander' in supporting bullying and harassment. Methods such as the 'no blame approach' ensure that the on-lookers no longer collude with bullying behaviour and develop a role in supporting anti-bullying values.
- Intervene when incidents are observed outside and inside the classroom so that pupils do not feel unprotected during particular parts of the day.

Tell Tell Tell

Listen Listen Listen

MEDWAY ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY GUIDELINES

Summary for support staff

The support staff of a school may include learning support assistants, clerical staff, mid day meal supervisors and the caretaker. These are adults who are often in a position to observe pupils out of the classroom. Therefore the contribution of support staff to the successful implementation of the anti-bullying policy is vital.

Responsibilities

➤ Ensure familiarity with the school's equal opportunity and anti-bullying policies.
➤ To attend training (which may be within school) on dealing with instances of bullying and harassment
➤ To be sensitive to all instances of bullying and harassment within the class and around the school; to deal with every incident in a fair and consistent manner according to the school's guidelines.
➤ To find out about the diversity of pupils represented within the school and wider community to be alert to comments or behaviour which could be offensive to specific groups of people.
➤ Meal supervisors to be informed about pupils' dietary requirements.
➤ To report incidents of bullying and harassment as set out within the school's guidelines.

Strategies

➤ Participate in training to become familiar with the school's equal opportunities, anti-bullying and anti harassment policies.
➤ Ensure familiarity with the school's systems for managing behaviour and then follow them consistently.
➤ Intervene in any incident observed around the school.
➤ Remain calm and avoid getting into confrontations with pupils.
➤ Model ways of talking and behaving which exemplify respect for the individual.
➤ Challenge stereotypic remarks e.g. sexist comments; racist assumptions.
➤ Keep a watch out for 'loners' who may be vulnerable to bullying and try to involve them in games with other pupils.
➤ Chat informally to pupils about their interests and their news. Being proactive about building up positive relationships with potentially difficult pupils can be helpful when later trying to modify their behaviour.

Tell Tell Tell

Listen Listen Listen

MEDWAY ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY GUIDELINES

Summary for parents/carers

Parents and carers have a very important role in supporting the school to implement its anti-bullying and behaviour policy effectively. Here are some ways in which you can be helpful.

Responsibilities

➢ To ask for information on the school's anti-bullying and behaviour policy and any approach used to respond to incidents of bullying or harassment.
➢ To sign the home/school contract, if available, and to abide by that contract.
➢ To work in partnership with the school on encouraging positive behaviour, valuing and respecting difference.
➢ To understand that children need to learn to deal with disagreements and conflict in an assertive but non-violent manner.
➢ To be alert to and inform the school about significant behaviour changes and signs of distress in their children.
➢ To inform staff of any significant change in circumstances which may affect the way in which pupils respond in school.
➢ Alert staff to information reported by pupils on incidents or any concerns arising about other pupils' behaviour and attitude.
➢ To communicate to children that you trust the school and staff to deal appropriately with incidents that arise and which school are aware of.

Strategies

➢ To clarify with staff the school's approach to working with parents.
➢ To be aware of opportunities offered for formal and informal consultation with parents.
➢ To discuss school incidents at home and to encourage children to share feelings and anxieties. Promote the development of important interpersonal skills such as listening to others, negotiation and communication.
➢ To provide opportunities to discuss with your child issues relevant to friendships and relationships both in and out of school.
➢ To tell the classteacher/form teacher of any concerns about bullying or harassment. Check out school procedures asking to be kept informed of any action taken.
➢ Be aware that many incidents will occur which are disagreements between pupils and where there is no clear bully or victim. Both parties will need to accept the consequences of their behaviour in line with the school policy.
➢ The positive parenting network will provide other ideas/strategies to support you.

Listen Listen Listen

MEDWAY ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY GUIDELINES

Summary for pupils

This policy is for you. However it is you and the other pupils/students who have the greatest responsibility in ensuring that the policy in school is effective in preventing and responding to bullying or harassment incidents.

Responsibilities

➢ To not become involved in bullying incidents.
➢ To be aware of the school's way of dealing with incidents and of the kinds of support available.
➢ Always tell a member of staff if you think bullying is happening.
➢ Talk to your parents/carers about any worries you may have.
➢ Support pupils who may be subjected to bullying.
➢ Be prepared to speak up if you see or hear something you think is unfair.

Strategies

➢ Value pupil differences and treat other people with respect.
➢ Use the school's procedures if you suspect incidents are taking place.
➢ Be alert in those places around the school where there is less adult supervision e.g. the playground, the toilets, corridors and stairs.
➢ Get involved in writing and of following rules guiding work and behaviour in the classroom and the school.
➢ Co-operate with other pupils to help the school as a whole deal with bullying and harassment efficiently e.g. by joining the school council, by becoming a peer mediator.
➢ Encourage teachers to discuss bullying issues. Take part fully in the curriculum opportunities offered e.g. stories, poetry, surveys and role-play.
➢ Provide good role models to younger pupils and support them if bullying occurs.
➢ Keep parents and carers informed about activities in and out of school. Contact support agencies for help if necessary.

Listen Listen Listen

MEDWAY ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Medway Education Authority is committed to taking an active role in the elimination of all forms of bullying and harassment. This policy aims to support schools to address bullying of pupils by other pupils.

1.2 The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy states that

'No service user, employee or job applicant will be discriminated against, harassed or receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital status, family commitments, sexual orientation, age, HIV status, religious or political beliefs, social class or trade union activity or irrelevant spent conviction.'

1.3 It is the right of all within the educational establishment (adults and pupils) to be able to work and study free from bullying, harassment or discrimination. In order to achieve this, the LEA and schools need to show their commitment to effective work in this area by their policies, practice and curriculum.

1.4 Successive legislation and initiatives, including those on Social Inclusion, have indicated that schools have a responsibility for the physical and emotional well being of pupils. They must be able to show the measures they are taking to tackle bullying amongst pupils. The 'LEA Support for School Improvement – A programme for Inspection' (November 1996) identifies the criteria for assessing the effectiveness of support for raising educational standards. One of these is that the 'LEA gives appropriate guidance, training and support to school staff to promote higher standards of behaviour in school to eliminate harassment and bullying'.

1.5 The purpose of this document is to build on the existing good practice in Medway Schools and to support all staff and governors to review their existing anti-bullying policies ensuring that they fulfil the school's legal obligations. This document is intended to be supportive and to help ensure that pupils are able to feel emotionally and physically safe.

2 Bullying, Harassment and Racism

2.1 Bullying can be difficult to identify. It has been defined as 'persistent, deliberate, unprovoked, psychological harm by a more powerful child or young person or group, against a weaker child or group'
(Psychologist Journal, 1991 P.Smith Vol 14(6))

Tell Tell Tell

Listen Listen Listen

It can usefully be thought of as needing to involve **intent, incidence and powerlessness.**

2.2 Harassment is a type of bullying where the intention of the act is to cause insult or injury for specific reasons connected to the identity of the victim. Throughout this document references to bullying and harassment are to be taken as including incidents of a racist nature. The document 'Diverse and Equal -Anti- Racism in Medway Education' will be helpful to staff when reviewing their equal opportunity policy and reflecting on their specifically anti racist stance. The 1999 MacPherson report recommended a new definition of racist incidents as being '**any incident which is perceived as racist by the victim or any other person'.** It also gave a definition of institutional racism as '**the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin'.** Attitudes and behaviour which are discriminatory because of prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping fall into this category.

2.3 Research by professor Olweus within the Scandinavian countries has been prominent in the field of bullying; he and others highlight significant proportions of students involved in bullying (bullies or victims). A survey by Kidscape in 1998 of 1,000 adults between 18 and 81 (the majority 22-40) showed that 828 of them believed they had been bullied. The majority of these left school at 16 or earlier and said that bullying had affected their plans for further education. A major piece of UK research was funded by the DfEE and was based at Sheffield University. This identified a range of aspects for successfully dealing with bullying including:

   ♦ Working on a whole school policy;
   ♦ Curriculum based strategies;
   ♦ Working directly with pupils involved in bullying;
   ♦ Enhancing breaks and lunchtimes;
   ♦ The involvement of pupils, parents/carers.

2.4 The MacPherson report placed an emphasis on using the curriculum to encourage children to value cultural diversity and in combating the development of racism. The damaging results of bullying, harassment and racism are of concern to all involved in the education of students in Medway. The effects can be long term and have serious outcomes for educational achievement as well as for personal/social development.

Listen Listen Listen

3   What might Bullying or Harassment look like?

3.1   Bullying and harassment can sometimes be perceived as 'minor incidents' but may be constant so having a significant, cumulative effect.
It may consist of: -

> ➤ Verbal harassment – name calling, insults, taunts, offensive language, constant criticism;
> ➤ Written harassment – insults, taunts, letters, text messages, e mails;
> ➤ Graffiti on walls, books, desks, school bags, obscene gestures;
> ➤ Vandalism of property;
> ➤ Repeated unfounded complaints, distorting and misrepresenting actions;
> ➤ Literature being brought into school which contain defamatory material;
> ➤ Refusal to co-operate or work with particular pupils; excluding pupils from the social group;
> ➤ Unprovoked physical assault or the threat of it;
> ➤ Causing physical or psychological distress individually or with a group of others.

3.2   Incidents of racism can take place in any school and do not necessarily need to be directed towards someone in particular. Items in the above list may fit that category e.g. racist graffiti. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. In determining whether an incident constitutes harassment or bullying, the context in which the incident occurs will need to be considered as will the victim's understanding of the perpetrator's motives. While dealing with the behaviour is important it is also necessary to challenge the perpetrator's beliefs and values.

3.3   Particularly vulnerable groups include refugees, pupils newly arrived in this country and those with an obvious 'difference'. This includes 'looked after' children who are frequently the target of bullying behaviours.

3.4   Looked after children often have little resilience, have few established relationships and may not have learnt to trust adults in school. This combination leave them particularly at risk to bullying behaviour. They may also perceive the behaviour of others in a negative light and react accordingly to this. One role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children in each school will be to ensure all staff are especially sensitive to the social context for each of these pupils and sometimes if necessary advocate for them as a parent might.

3.5   Every secondary school will have a proportion of pupils who are becoming aware that they are not heterosexual. This group is extremely vulnerable, in part because it may also be difficult for them to confide in friends or

Listen Listen Listen

even their own parents. The vast majority of adult gay and lesbian people report bullying at school.

3.6 It should be noted that children and pupils who bully may have been, or may still be victims of bullying/abuse themselves.

3.7 Bullying and harassment generally involve a power differential. This can be helpful in distinguishing between aggressive and or boisterous behaviour which goes too far (but is part of age appropriate development) and bullying.

4. The wider community

4.1 It is the view of the Police in Medway that the reported incidents constitute a small proportion of the total picture. Often the police are told by parents that they have approached the school and that 'nothing was done'. This is also the view of the Education Welfare Service and Medway's Commission for Racial Equality. This highlights the importance of parental involvement in the formulation of the policy and in on-going communication where appropriate. It is also important for outside agencies to follow clear protocols where they check with parents about how school was approached, about the feedback they have had from school and the importance of working in partnership with the school. Incidents which occur out of school, e.g. on the way to or from home, may be treated differently by schools. However, there are likely to be repercussions for school in terms of attendance as well as the emotional well being of pupils. Tackling bullying, harassment and racism must be seen as a community issue and not something that begins and ends with the school day.

4.2 Case law has shown that the school has no direct responsibility and accountability for bullying behaviours on the way to and from school. However, clearly if pupils do not feel safe they will not be available to learn, may have a higher absentee rate and there may be escalation/retaliations which do take place in school.

4.3 The school has a duty of care to ensure as far as it can that pupils are supervised before and after school when they are on site but need to specify these times to parents and discourage pupils from being on site otherwise.

Listen Listen Listen

5.   Responsibilities of the LEA

5.1   In order to meet the legal requirements of the legislation included in this document, the LEA will need to: -

> Ensure that this policy is made known to schools and governing bodies;
> Provide opportunities for training and disseminate good practice in the area of effective handling of incidents involving bullying and harassment;
> Encourage schools to develop equal opportunities and anti-bullying policies which promote positive responses to bullying and harassment and which address anti racism;
> Ensure that racist incidents are reported to and collated by the LEA.

5.2   The LEA has a responsibility to collate the information on racist bullying. The results are reported to Education and Leisure Management Team and to a subgroup of the Community Safety Partnership. Issues such as 'nil' returns from secondary schools may be questioned.

5.3   Where there are serious incidents and Head teachers report that they need support the LEA will aim to provide this.

5.4   The LEA sometimes receives complaints from parents over bullying issues at individual schools. Sometimes the Educational Welfare Service has 'bullying' cited as reasons for why a pupil is not attending school. Each complaint is followed up according to the complaints procedure and the issues are also logged on a spreadsheet kept with the Educational Psychology Service.

6.   Responsibilities of schools and governing bodies

6.1   All members of the school community need to be able to demonstrate the actions they are taking to combat bullying and harassment through policies and practice. Schools are required to have a policy on anti-bullying but they will need to be able to show how this is implemented and to evaluate its effectiveness. From September 2000 schools have also been expected to have clear protocols for working against racism.

6.2   All secondary schools have access to the Key Stage 3 Strategy. Within the materials are behaviour audits. An in depth bullying audit may be used to identify issues for an individual school. All secondary schools have a Key Stage 3 Strategy Coordinator who will have an important role in ensuring anti bullying measures are widely used within school.

6.3   All schools have been sent copies of the DfES Guidance document and video 'Bullying don't suffer in silence'. School policies and anti bullying

Listen Listen Listen

interventions are expected to build on the guidance available to them e.g. via the Key Stage 3 documentation.

7. Development of a school policy

7.1 The LEA advises that all schools should have school policies, which cover equal opportunities, bullying, and harassment. Such policies should contain a clear statement of opposition to all forms of bullying and harassment (including racism) and state that such behaviour will not be tolerated. For a policy to be effective, the whole staff, governors and pupils should be involved at the formative stages. The DfES materials 'Bullying – don't suffer in silence' gives guidance to schools and examples of good practice across different school phases.

7.2 While this document is concerned with pupil to pupil behaviour, the LEA acknowledges that there are inherent power differentials between members of staff and between pupils and staff. The potential exists for adults to bully each other and for staff to behave in ways to pupils which could be construed as 'bullying'. (Advice can be sought from Education Personnel. This issue is covered in the staff handbook). Where pupils allege harassment by staff, the headteacher should investigate.

7.3 Headteachers and governors should establish the criteria by which incidents of bullying and harassment are reported.

7.4 There is a clear link between a school's behaviour policy and the anti bullying policy. Many schools will address bullying issues within the behaviour policy. As part of this schools will consider setting up pastoral support plans (PSPs) for pupils where their bullying behaviour is placing them at risk of school exclusion. Legislation has been passed enabling 'parent contracts' to be drawn up. It would be good practice for these to be used only if parental cooperation could not be sought via a PSP. A 'parent order' may be sought if parent behaviour is a clear contributor to the pupil's poor behaviour.

7.5 The relationship between the curriculum and the school's preventative measures for tackling bullying may be made explicit within the policy. This can be an effective way of reassuring parents that anti bullying is high on the school agenda. Obvious curricula areas are PSHE, Citizenship and the Behaviour and Attendance Strand.

Listen Listen Listen

8. Monitoring

8.1 The monitoring process gives the school information about the efficacy of their procedures in combating bullying and harassment. This process allows any changes in bullying to become apparent over time. It also demonstrates the school's commitment to addressing the issues.

8.2 The targets set out within the anti-bullying policy will determine the focus for monitoring and the strategy adopted for collecting the information. It may be that there is a target of 'promoting whole school approaches to reducing the number of bullying incidents', in which case auditing current curriculum provision which address issues such as personal safety and self esteem may be appropriate. A target may also focus on 'increasing the involvement of pupils in dealing with bullying incidents'. In that case it might be appropriate to interview pupils on their perceptions of progress on this issue.

8.3 Collection of baseline data at the start of a review cycle is important in being able to show that particular ways of promoting anti-bullying are effective. Aspects which schools may wish to monitor may include

- ◆ Numbers of reported incidents
- ◆ Levels of staff awareness
- ◆ Levels of bullying in relation to sex, disability, ethnicity and sexuality
- ◆ Levels of parental involvement.

NB it is now a requirement that schools record and monitor all incidents of a racist nature. For further guidance, please refer to the 'Racist Incidents – Guidance to Schools' document.

8.4 Schools are likely to have their own process, including forms, for recording and monitoring incidents. These will differ from school to school. There is an example of a record form included with this document (Appendix C), which schools may wish to consider using. However, each school is uniquely different and a common format for all schools is not considered to be appropriate.

It is neither practical nor helpful to monitor everything. It will be important to be clear about the purpose of monitoring, about who the findings are for and what is achievable within the given timescale. The findings should be used to inform further improvements in the policy and procedures. The Medway Guidance document on Racist Incidents gives helpful advice for school in how to support victims and what to do about the perpetrator.

Listen Listen Listen

9.   What next? Good practice ideas

9.1   Restorative Justice – supported via Medway mediation have been working in a number of Medway schools. This has involved training staff in restorative justice techniques and supporting schools over particular incidents when relationships have broken down.

9.2   Medway Mediation has been working with primary and secondary schools supporting them to train peer mediators. Schools have been part of this scheme have found it to be a useful way of encouraging the pupil population to actively participate in setting the school ethos and in encouraging pupils to accept and understand the consequences of their actions.

Medway Mediation write:

Peer mediation, peer mentoring and restorative justice conferencing in schools are all powerful tools in a school's policy to combat bullying and harassment. Early intervention has been advocated as the most appropriate way to prevent and address bullying.
(For more information on the schemes please contact Medway Mediation.)

Medway Mediation -- Good Practice Observed

Several secondary schools in Medway use all three schemes, whilst many more (both secondary and primary) use peer mediation and /or restorative justice.
> In one Medway School the restorative justice process has been firmly imbedded in the school's ethos, has been written into the school's behaviour policy and given prominence in the school's prospectus.
> Where exclusion is being considered a restorative justice conference is always offered in the hope that an exclusion can be prevented.
> A conference always takes place before an excluded pupil is integrated back into school.
> The skills learned by both peer mediators and mentors are invaluable life skills, which in the best run projects are utilized in innovative ways to help all the students understand resolution skills and improve their emotional intelligence.

9.3   Pupils will not talk to adults about the reality of the bullying experienced in the school unless the ethos is there and embedded within school culture. Where a school has carefully involved the whole school community in tailoring preventative work via the curriculum, a consistent policy and a real inclusive culture where diversity and difference are valued, any 'reactive' measures are more likely to be effective.

Listen Listen Listen

Legal framework

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
There is a general duty of care where the employer must take reasonable measures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others sharing the workplace. This duty includes a responsibility to safeguard mental health. Schools and employers who fail to protect staff and pupils from bullying could be in breach of the Act.

The Act and Regulations apply to anyone who may be affected by the way an employer conducts his or her business. Under the Regulations a risk assessment must be carried out on any reasonably foreseeable hazards and must result in appropriate, protective and preventative measures being implemented. The risk assessment must be written and its findings must be communicated to those it covers.

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
It is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of gender.

Race Relations Act 1976
This makes it an offence to discriminate against another because of their race, colour or ethnic origin. There are many definitions of racial harassment but the common element in all definitions is that reference is made to the fact that the conduct described as harassment is unwanted by and offensive to the recipient.

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) defines harassment as:-
'Offensive or hostile behaviour which causes discomfort, distress, exclusion or withdrawal.'
It is now a recommendation that the working definition of a racist incident is:-
'Any incident which is perceived as racist by the victim or any other person.'

Public Order Act 1986
This includes as offences those of causing harassment, alarm and distress. The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act created a new offence of intentionally causing harassment or distress on whatever grounds including racial, sexual or religious.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995
Schools must show that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability when decisions are made about admission. Schools that are inaccessible to those with disabilities are required to say so and to consider how they could be made accessible in a cost-effective way.

Tell Tell Tell   18

Listen Listen Listen

Protection from Harassment Act 1997
This act made harassment both a civil tort and a criminal offence. The Act's principle aim was to deal with stalking but gives additional support to those subjected to racial or sexual harassment; or to harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation or disability. In the work context, the employer must be able to demonstrate that they took preventative measures to avoid harassment.

DfEE Circular 10/99 'Social Inclusion: Pupil Support
Schools have a duty to record and report racist incidents to the LEA.

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child
States that adults should make sure children are protected from abuse and violence.

Human Rights Act 1998
This came into force in October 2000. This gives UK courts the power to enforce the rights of the individual under the European Convention of Human Rights. Schools will need to be able to show that incidents of bullying were monitored and action was taken in line with the policy.

Contact details:

Zoe Barkham, Wellbeing Strategy Manager
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
CHATHAM
ME4 4TR

Tel: (01634) 331038

Email: zoe.barkham@medway.gov.uk

Mavis Gibson, Anti-Bullying Lead
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
CHATHAM
ME4 4TR

Tel: (01634) 332328

Email: mavis.gibson@medway.gov.uk

SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING ASSESSMENT – short version

The Anti-bullying Alliance has designed this assessment tool to assist schools with measuring their progress in anti-bullying policy and practice.

School	School Representative/ Anti-bullying Lead	Local authority/Region

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Impact Indicators	Assessment 1 Date: Scores (1-4)	Priorities (mark with a X)	Assessment 2* Date: Scores (1-4)	Priorities (mark with a X)	Final Report Date: Scores (1-4)
1) School Leadership					
2) School Policy					
3) Data Collection and Analysis					
4) Prevention					
5) Responding/ Intervention					
6) Involving Pupils					
7) Engaging Parents/ Carers					
8) Staff Training and Development					
9) Partnership Working					
Overall score average (1-4)					

It may not always be necessary to complete Assessment 2. All schools should complete Assessment 1 and Final assessment.

SECTION ASSESSMENT

Section Assessment

1. Outstanding – The school is able to demonstrate that it matches the section statement
2. Good – The school largely matches the section statement but has identified areas it needs to further develop and is actively working to address the issues. It has identified the priorities
3. In need of some improvement – The school has recognised that there are significant issues to be addressed if it is to match the section statement. It has identified the priorities but there is no significant progress being made
4. In need of significant improvement – The school does not match the section statement and there are significant issues that are not being addressed

	Yes	No	Notes
1) SCHOOL LEADERSHIP			
Senior lead for bullying			
Lead Governor for bullying			
School Action Plan			
Assessment (please circle) 1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			
2) SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY			
Defines ALL methods and practices of bullying (e.g.homophobic,cyberbullying)			
Includes prevention methods			
Includes response strategies			
Involved pupil consultation			
Reviewed in last 12 months			
Assessment (please circle) 1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			
3) DATA COLLECTION			
Pupil perception survey in last 12 months			
Recording system for bullying incidents			
Assessment (please circle) 1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			
4) PREVENTION			
Awareness raising activities in last term			
Up to date equality policies that reference bullying (DDA, Race, Gender)			
Behaviour policy that references bullying and related sanctions			
School environment – assessed in last 12 months			
Curriculum – lessons that relate to bullying			
Assessment (please circle) 1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			

5) RESPONDING			
Range of interventions			
Referral to outside agencies where appropriate			
Parent/carer engagement			
Assessment (please circle)			
1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			
6) INVOLVING PUPILS			
School Council involvement			
Peer support programmes			
Campaigning and awareness raising			
Celebration (e.g. Diana Award)			
Assessment (please cicle)			
1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			
7) ENGAGING PARENTS AND CARERS			
Awareness raising activities			
Parent perception survey in last 12 months			
Reporting system			
Complaints procedure			
Assessment (please circle)			
1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			
8) STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT			
Senior staff trained			
All staff trained			
Assessment (please circle)			
1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			
9) PARTNERSHIP WORKING			
Engaged with LA anti-bullying strategy			
Work with feeder primaries			
Work with other schools			
Work with the community			
Assessment (please circle)			
1. Outstanding 2. Good 3. Needs some improvement 4. Needs significant improvement			