

BULLYING GUIDELINES

ACTION AGAINST BULLYING

10 key steps

1. Involve *all* members of the school community.
2. Clarify exactly *what bullying is*; build your definition.
3. Gain agreement that it is an *unacceptable* behaviour.
4. Develop clear guidelines on individual *responsibility*.
5. Expect *consistent* responses to all known cases.
6. Identify/monitor *areas/times* pupils identify as being unsafe.
7. *Support victims* of bullying.
8. *Change* bullying behaviours.
9. Help bully victims develop *appropriate behaviours*.
10. Maintaining a safe school is *everyone's responsibility*.

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Section one: Background

The need for an anti-bullying policy

Bullying is to be found in every school in the country. It is an inevitable part of growing up and it is important that every school recognises the extent and impact of the behaviour and takes steps to stop it happening. Where bullying is ignored or downplayed there is a sizeable minority of pupils who will suffer ongoing torment and harassment from their peers. This can cause long term damage to victims and there is a growing body of evidence that links school bullies to later criminality and domestic violence.

While many schools may fail to recognise that they have a problem with bullying, there is a remarkable degree of consistency in observed rates of the abuse in schools. Recent studies (Adair, 1998) indicate that New Zealand rates of bullying fit the general international profile whereby in primary schools between 20-30% of pupils have an *ongoing* problem with abusive peer behaviour, and between 5-15% in secondary schools. The vast majority of pupils are aware of the abuse and 75% report being bullied at least once during the last twelve months.

Country	Primary		Secondary	
	Often bullied	At least weekly	Often bullied	At least weekly
New Zealand	not available	not available	15%	9%
England	27%	10%	10%	6%
International	23%	15%	10%	6%

Few pupils tell a teacher when being bullied. (Only 20% in one recent Auckland study)

Sadly, too often the witnesses to the abuse keep quiet to avoid being the next target. A silence surrounds the behaviour that masks its prevalence and lulls adults into a belief that it is not a feature of their school. The studies confirm that while the number of individuals abused decreases with age, the intensity and nastiness of the abuse increases. The older the pupils involved, the more abusive and unsafe the behaviour.

The benefits of addressing bullying are tangible and measurable; a reduction in school bullying translates to an improved learning environment based on pupil assertiveness and co-operation. Aggressive behaviour is identified early and consistent school wide strategies are developed to deal with it. Disruptive pupils lose the silent collusion of their peers and are forced to change the way they relate to others. The other pupils are supported and learn to recognise the damage such behaviour causes. A genuine community of interest amongst the pupils is developed. Victims are supported by their classmates rather than being rejected and isolated. Pupils who see the abusive behaviour learn to empathise with the victim and intervene, either directly or by alerting adults or older or more powerful pupils. Everyone in the school community

is valued and accepted for what they are. There is recognition that some pupils lack prosocial skills and there are programmes available to develop these skills in a supportive environment.

International research quantifies the dramatic reductions in bullying that can be achieved when a school confronts the issue. In a landmark study for the British Department for Education, a team from the University of Sheffield (Sharp, Smith 1994) studied the impact of a range of anti-bullying initiatives. Their investigations showed that reductions of between 20-80% in the behaviour were achieved in the twenty-four schools studied.

The key elements in successful anti-bullying interventions were summarised in the following way:

1. *“There was a direct correlation between the time and quality of effort spent in developing a **whole school policy** and the reduction in the levels of bullying.”*
2. *“... the process of developing a **common understanding** of the problem was as important as any other factor.”*
3. *“**Curriculum interventions** were useful in raising awareness and promoting discussion, but on their own were not important.”*
4. *“In schools that adopted a wide range of interventions there was a marked increase in the willingness of victims to tell. The creation of this **‘telling environment’** was seen by the schools as a major success.”*
5. *“Work with individuals, both victims and bullies was successful but there was a need for specialised training and back up.”*

A school that puts in the time and effort to develop a safe emotional and physical environment will be successful. We must ensure that all pupils are given adequate protection from the unthinking aggressive actions of their peers. The devastation suffered by some young people can have a life long impact, destroying their self-esteem and depriving them of the opportunity to enjoy their time at school. There are many cases of young people acting out, dropping out of school and becoming completely isolated because of ongoing bullying.

Bullying is

Bullying can be defined in many ways, though generally the following applies:

Bullying usually has three common features:

- » it is deliberate, hurtful behaviour
- » it is repeated often over a period of time
- » it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

There are three main types of bullying:

- » **physical**; hitting, kicking, taking belongings

- » **verbal**; name-calling, insulting, racist remarks
- » **indirect**; spreading nasty stories, excluding from groups

Bully perceptions

Researchers have found that many of the pupils who bully do so because they believe that they are popular and that their actions cement the support of their peer group. If there are no consequences to the bad behaviour, if the victim does not complain and if the peer group silently or even actively colludes it is understandable that the bully will stay with the behaviour.

Victims perceptions

It is important that we recognise that victims of bullying are often pupils with poor social skills and who lack the confidence to seek help. They are likely to have few friends and be dependent on one or two of their peer group for company and support. Their passive temperament means that they find it difficult to start and maintain friendships and they will have little status within the group. This lack of resilience makes them ideal victims. They will not challenge their tormentor and will either retreat further into their shell or overreact and provide great entertainment for the class. They will often not have the support of either the teacher or their more assertive classmates who find them unappealing and it is highly unlikely that they will seek help.

In the excellent Strathclyde Education anti-bullying resource kit, Promoting Positive Relationships, Alan McLean uses a "[Relationship Map](#)" to explain the complexity of group relationships and the bullying process.

This two dimensional model helps understand the bullying process by raising consciousness of the way everyone, depending on the situation, is vulnerable to bullying behaviour, as bully, victim or bystander.

Because pupils in schools work together and belong to the same community, bullying is a relationship rather incidents of isolated violence. An understanding of the motivations of the individuals involved also helps us gain a picture of the situation. In their overview of the No Blame Approach, George Robinson and Barbara Maines describe the participants in the relationship:

A bully is *“a person behaving in a way which might meet needs for excitement, status, material gain or group process and does not recognise or meet the needs and rights of the other people/person who are harmed by the behaviour”.*

While the victim is *“a person or group that is harmed by the behaviour of others and who does not have the resources, status or ability to counteract or stop the harmful behaviour”.*

(Maines, Robinson 1992)

Most (80%) pupils are not actively involved in bullying. They neither bully nor are victims. They know it’s wrong but unless they are asked for help, or are made to feel they have a responsibility or duty to act, they will silently collude with the abuse.

The Whole School Approach

The work of Dan Olweus and the Sheffield team clearly show that *dramatic* reductions in school bullying is the result of the whole school becoming involved. Action by well meaning individuals, working in isolation can support individual pupils but in the grand scheme are not effective. Unless the whole school community is able to gain a clear understanding of the nature of bullying it will remain *a hidden behaviour*. Young people are searching for leadership, support and clarification from the adults in the school. Too often they see hurtful behaviour not being challenged, and being motivated by fear and self preservation find protection in association with the pupils behaving aggressively. These “bullies” misperceive this association as both friendship and support for their aggressive behaviour and developed a misunderstanding that they are popular and that the majority supports their actions. (It is interesting that many identified bullies have high levels of self-esteem.)

Legal and Curriculum Requirements

Charter and National Guidelines:

Schools not only have a moral obligation to reduce bullying, their charter agreement between the school’s trustees and the Minister of Education specifically directs the school “*to provide a safe physical and emotional environment*”.

National Administration Guideline number 5

The *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* has several relevant statements that emphatically tell schools they must address issues of bullying:

One of the eight **essential skills** “*Social and Co-operative Skills*” states that students will:

- Develop good relationships with others, and work in co-operative ways to achieve common goals;
- Take responsibility as a member of a group for jointly decided actions and decisions;
- Participate appropriately in a range of social and cultural settings;
- Learn to recognise, analyse, and respond appropriately to discriminatory practices and behaviours;
- Acknowledge individual differences and demonstrate respect for the rights of all people;
- Demonstrate consideration for others through qualities such as integrity, reliability, trustworthiness, caring or compassion (*aroha*), fairness, diligence, tolerance (*rangimarie*), and hospitality or generosity (*manaakitanga*);
- Develop a sense of responsibility for the well-being of others and for the environment;
- Participate effectively as responsible citizens in a democratic society;
- Develop the ability to negotiate and reach consensus.

The Attitudes and Values section states:

“Students will examine the context and implications of their own values and those of others, and the values on which our current social structures are based.”

New Zealand Curriculum Framework, page 21

While this is the most direct imperative for action, there are several other clear directions contained in the various curriculum statements as well as individual school charters that support the adoption of an anti-bullying initiative. The Health and Physical Education Curriculum Statement has four aims, two of which are relevant:

3. *“develop understandings, skills and attitudes that enhance interaction and relationships with others;”*
4. *“participate in creating healthy communities and environments by taking responsible and critical action.”*

[Health and Physical Education Draft Curriculum, page 11](#)

This is further developed:

- *respect for the rights for others, including*
 - *acceptance of a range of abilities*
 - *acceptance of diverse viewpoints*
 - *tolerance and open-mindedness*
- *care and concern for others in their community and the environment, including:*
 - *co-operation and awhina*
 - *concepts of aroha, manaakitanga, care, compassion, and mahi a ngakau*
 - *constructive challenge and competition*
 - *positive involvement and participation*
 - *being responsible for each other and building each other’s mana*
- *social justice, including:*
 - *fairness*
 - *inclusiveness and non-discriminatory practices*
 - *discouraging behaviour that breaches social values (for example, physical or verbal abuse)*

[Health and Physical Education Draft Curriculum Page 11](#)

Links between an anti-bullying initiative and other safety issues, such as sexual harassment, conflict resolution, and discipline.

Targeting bullying behaviour is a key component in providing *a safe school environment*. Grouped with several other initiatives it will form an over-arching and comprehensive [safe school policy](#), sending a clear message to all members of the school community about the philosophy of the school.

This could include policy statements on:

- crisis management
- discipline
- complaints
- sexual harassment

- bullying

All these policies are based on the desire for students to be safe and confident that the school community will support them if they are victims of abuse or the bad behaviour.

Section two: Getting Started

Developing a bully free school

Young people need leadership and support in dealing with aggressive behaviour from their peers. No guidance may lead to bullying and an acceptance of abusive behaviour

There are several clear stages a school needs to go through to ensure that it is working towards being bully proof or bully free:

1. Gain knowledge and expertise

Ensure that someone in the school is given the task of reading available literature. (Several good starting points are listed in the bibliography). This will ensure that one person has become familiar with accepted definitions, programmes and processes.

2. Convince key groups that an anti-bullying initiative is important

Staff

Use a full (**everyone** needs to attend) staff meeting to raise awareness and knowledge of the issue. It is important that an anti-bully initiative is 'sold' — it is not an extra task, rather an essential part of ensuring that the school is a safe place for **all**. All teachers know about bullying; allow staff to reflect on their personal experience (at their school, of their own children, in their own classrooms) and encourage an open discussion of the difficulties and probable failures in effectively countering bullying. The anti-bullying initiative must be tied to the school's philosophy as laid out in the charter. It must be an integral part of the school's mission.

Ask the staff 'expert' to present research findings that clearly show the validity of interventions. Use this and other information to challenge them with safety issues ... suicide, future criminality, etc. and the long term social consequences of not instilling the ethic of being concerned. This may lead onto discussion of the damage to the majority of pupils, who while not actively participating in the abuse are wounded by their lack of power to support victims.

A review of the state of the 'student community' is useful:

- What are the forces in action that allow bullying to thrive?
- What roles do adults and other pupils need to play?
- How can we encourage leadership amongst the pupils?

Use the school charter and the National Curriculum Framework to help emphasise the school's statutory obligation to provide an empowering environment whereby all students are able to reject intimidation.

All staff must be committed to a common response to bullying when it does happen. Their immediate intervention is crucial. Clear procedures must take place when a case of bullying is discovered.

All teachers need to have a strong commitment to reducing and understanding bullying — its causes, the consequences and best practice in dealing with it. This must be supported by clear guidelines that stipulate the responsibilities teaching staff have when dealing with a case of bullying. Everyone needs to accept that his or her classroom must be a safe, supportive environment where bad behaviour is not tolerated and bullying is recognised and publicly condemned.

In other words, teachers need to:

“Share ideas and beliefs about ways in which an attractive, harmonious environment contributes to well-being and work with others to make improvements.”

[Health and Physical Education Draft Curriculum, page 53](#)

Gain a commitment to do something about the problem. Ensure that you have the support and involvement of the senior management team.

Board of Trustees

A brief presentation about the nature of bullying will be useful to ensure that the subsequent policy will gain the acceptance and support of the Trustees. It may also be useful to gain the active support of at least one trustee to work on a planning group.

Seniors Pupils

Senior pupils may play a vital role in many anti-bullying activities. It is useful to mobilise their interest in the issue through informal class discussion or in existing forums. Using them in drama role-plays during curriculum discussions on bullying can help juniors understand that it's a problem many others have shared. Senior pupils can fulfil a very important role providing non-threatening contacts, and in many schools their participation in mediation programmes has enhanced the safety of the playground.

3. Form a planning group to develop a genuine whole school approach

Should be small, (6-10 members is ideal), influential (at least one member of the senior management team and a Trustee is a real bonus) motivated and familiar with the management of change. Allocate key development areas — environment, curriculum, senior students, policy, interventions, parents, information.

4. Develop an action plan. The following stages are recommended:

Gather Information





5. Put the plan into action:

Gather Information:

Programmes:

- Find out what other similar schools have used. There is a [wide range of programmes](#) that seek to address some of the issues associated with bullying.
- Survey staff to find out what existing programmes or initiatives in the school compliment an anti-bullying approach.
- What approach would best fit the current culture of the school?

Surveys:

- Develop some base-line data that will give some quantitative information on levels of bullying. The model used by the Specialist Education Services Eliminating Violence - Managing Anger programme is an excellent example.
- Investigate perceptions staff, pupils and parents have on bullying. (See [Rigby, 1996](#))
- This data provides information that can be used to measure the success or otherwise of the intervention.

Warning: Any student survey places an ethical responsibility to report back and to act on findings. A failure to do this may be seen to dash the raised expectations of victims leaving them further isolated.

Raise awareness/consult. Development a ‘common understanding’ of what bullying is and expressing this in a policy is one key to reducing bullying.

Parent Evenings

Parents and pupils need the opportunity to develop a sound understanding of the issues surrounding bullying. [Parent/caregiver meetings](#) that allow everyone to look at the issues and to develop an understanding of the nature of the behaviour and the consequence and impact of bullying on all participants work well.

By this stage the pupils and parents will need to receive professional advice as to what they should do when they encounter bullying behaviour. Advice information pamphlets need to be available.

Establish confidence that there are strategies to help victims and bullies.

Underpinning this is the need to gain the trust of pupils so that they will act when either they are intimidated or when they see someone else intimidated. They need to see that there are available support structures that will help them and that the school takes the issues seriously. A telling environment is a prerequisite.

Develop draft policy

In light of the consultation develop a draft policy that makes it explicit that the school rejects all bullying behaviours. The policy should address the following issues:

1. Where will your bullying policy fit within your charter framework?

- 1.1. c/f national administration guideline #5: Schools are required to “***provide a safe physical and emotional environment***”
- 1.2. *Link your policy to the charter. For example tie it to the mission statement or a particular relevant objective.*

2. What is the rationale for your school having an anti bullying policy?

- 2.1. *State clearly why the school has this policy, how it is part of the school’s ethic and spell out the links to the charter.*
- 2.2. *“[School’s name] actively seeks to provide a safe supportive learning environment that is free from all forms of intimidation and harassment.*

3. What is your school’s definition of bullying? How was it developed? How are members of the school community made aware of and gain understanding of this definition?

- 3.1. *This is a key ingredient of a successful anti-bullying approach. A shared, mutually agreed definition of the targeted behaviour is **essential** if the whole school community is to support the policy.*
- 3.2. *It should not be imposed or copied, rather developed from a number of ‘consultative meetings’ where the behaviour is discussed and the definition teased out. The definition should be part of information given to new parents and students and should be revisited annually to ensure it remains acceptable.*
- 3.3. *“**Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour that has no place at [school]. It can include on-going physical or emotional intimidation that causes anxiety or stress to the victim. It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to ensure that bullying behaviour is actively rejected.**”*

4. What systems does the school have in place to detect and to reduce bullying behaviour?

- 4.1. *What are the reporting methods available to both staff and students when they are aware of bullying behaviour?*
- 4.2. *Is there provision of ‘safe places’ for shy or isolated students during break times? (These could be special activity rooms, supervised library etc.)*

5. How will students in your school become aware of the impact of bullying behaviour?

5.1. *There needs to be a clear statement on how the school will raise the awareness of bullying each year. This may include the development of an information pamphlet to accompany a specific programme.*

6. What are the expectations on staff in detecting and dealing with cases of bullying?

6.1. *The safety of students is the prime responsibility of teaching staff. They need to be aware of the importance of setting high personal standards.*

6.2. *Clear statements of what staff are to do when they suspect bullying. This would include referral procedures, and mechanisms to ensure that all staff are aware of the school's policy and expectations.*

6.3. *Staff need to be encouraged to actively adopt an anti-bullying attitude in their teaching.*

7. What will be the response of the school to cases of bullying?

7.1. *The policy needs to give a clear indication of the way the inevitable cases of bullying will be addressed.*

7.2. *How will 'first offenders' be dealt with?*

7.3. *What happens to students who persistently bully?*

7.4. *How will victims of bullying be supported:*

7.4.1. *When they report bullying and are being intimidated*

7.4.2. *When they are feeling vulnerable and isolated*

8. In what ways will the school involve parent's/caregivers?

8.1. *When and who will inform parents of students involved in bullying?*

8.2. *What support will be offered to parents of involved students?*

8.3. *What procedures will be in place for parents to report cases of bullying?*

An example of a bullying sub [policy integrated](#) into a comprehensive Safe School Policy.

Section three: Intervention

Curriculum Interventions & Classroom Programmes

All pupils in the school will need to have their awareness raised in a variety of ways. This can be:

- Formalised within the curriculum
- Part of special year group training sessions or as
- Part of a special prosocial skill development programme

The themes developed in the awareness raising stage for pupils need to be carefully developed and reinforced. These themes could be:

- What is bullying?
- Why do people bully?
- Links with other abuse activities

- Bullying can be stopped
- Share the problem; telling others-friends, parents & teachers is an essential step
- Everyone needs to share responsibility to help stop bullying behaviour
- The problem is the bullying behaviour not the victim

The aim of any [curriculum intervention](#) is to develop knowledge and help form values and attitudes. At all times these need to be ‘contextualised’; made relevant for the pupils and their lives. There are several options in organising the anti-bullying curriculum and each school needs to choose the approach that is most appropriate for them:

1. Integrating an anti-bullying component into the [existing curriculum areas](#).
2. Introduce a series of discrete anti-bullying modules
3. [Anti-bullying modules](#) become part of the health curriculum
4. Anti-bullying awareness days are held

The implementation needs to be carefully monitored to ensure consistency of message and coverage. It must be reinforced in school wide forums such as assemblies and newsletters and have the active and visible support of all staff.

Developing a bully proof school environment

Pupils have the right to a safe school.

Easy points of contact for pupils need to be established.

Classrooms must always be safe places:

- Free from ridicule and harassment
- Where their possessions are not stolen or ‘borrowed’ by others
- Where learning takes place in a supportive environment

It is one of the prime responsibilities of the classroom teacher to ensure that such an environment is created and maintained. The school needs to provide necessary support for the individual teacher so that they are able to maintain this safe classroom environment. The discipline policy and structures are mechanisms to support and maintain safe supportive classrooms. Many teachers and schools find it helpful to develop clear statements of what is appropriate behaviour in the classroom. This may be in the form of a school-wide [Code of Conduct](#) or in an individual classroom or school statement. What’s unacceptable needs to be implicit in the code or statement needs.

Once this environment has been created it is important that the teacher is alert for the signs of bullying. Bullies are attention seekers. They will use any opportunity to increase their popularity, usually at the expense of an unassuming, vulnerable peer. They will establish their power base by testing the response of the less powerful members of the group, watching how they react when small things happen. They find out how the teacher reacts to minor transgressions to the rules and wait to see if the ‘victim’ will complain. It is important that teachers are vigilant and consistent.

Bullying is much more likely to flourish in a poorly supervised classroom where the teacher ignores the signals and does not take a strong stand when bullying occurs. Simple management techniques such as insisting that there is no graffiti on books, desks and walls removes opportunities for bullying to develop. Teachers must accept that they are important role models and by refusing to accept put downs, name-calling, teasing, harassment and petty theft in their classrooms they send important messages not only to the bullies but also to the majority of pupils who need clarity and leadership.

Good teachers encourage the 'telling of tales'. They develop mechanisms to ensure that **all** their pupils can report bad behaviour without fear of retribution or being chastised for telling tales. They need to know that the teacher will use the information to change the offending behaviour in a constructive manner.

One example of good practice is to give all the class the chance to write up any concerns they have about others bad behaviour and to 'post' these anonymously in a box. Everyone writes whether they have a concern or not. The teacher will then follow up the complaints at some stage during the day when time permits. This simple procedure enables the teacher to gain valuable information about what is happening without being bombarded immediately an event happens. The pupils gain an assurance that the issue will be dealt with, and the bad behaviours are targeted and changed. Most importantly the pupils who are behaving badly quickly learn that their peer group rejects the behaviour, that their actions are not popular and that the teacher will take action.

The abuse is often so low level that the teacher fails to notice, and the other pupils feel it has nothing to do with them and ignore it, or, in an effort to part of the action, join in the harassment. It is unrealistic to expect the victim to either challenge the abuse or to seek help. They are desperate to 'fit in', and will often believe that it is their fault that they are being abused. This view is very often reinforced by the attitude of adults in their lives.

Teachers will often correctly identify that the victim lacks prosocial skills, have low self-esteem, and need to learn to stand up for themselves. This can quickly be turned into excusing the bad behaviour of the bully who escapes from any consequences with the behaviour reinforced. However this ignores the fact that the immediate problem is the harassment the victim is suffering and it must be stopped.

A good teacher will:

- Notice when a pupil is isolated and sad
- Look for the reasons for this
- Not see it as just play-fighting, name-calling, a bit of fun or just part of growing up
- Work with the victim to stop the offending behaviour
- Not tell the victim to ignore it, to sort it out themselves or to hit back

It is important that teachers recognise that a safe classroom is the most positive way of ensuring a positive learning environment. It needs to be the top priority

recognising that pupils learn best when they are part of a co-operative, enabling environment.

Outside the classroom

The 'active' nature of most bullies makes it very important that free time is well supervised and that there are plenty of opportunities for them to be kept busy.

- Have as many activities as possible available with clear rules to avoid the minority dominating. (Dr Maris O'Rourke wrote an interesting Set Article in 1987 that gives some excellent pointers on developing safe playgrounds.)
- Ensure that pupils who feel vulnerable, or who are currently in a bully-victim relationship have a [safe place](#) to go.
- [Survey pupils](#) as to the places and times they may feel vulnerable or not safe. A useful and easy to administer exercise is to ask the pupils to colour code a map of the school, identifying the places they feel most safe to those they feel least safe in.
- Provide adequate supervision in places and times that pupils have identified as being 'unsafe'.
- Target areas and activities that bullies dominate. Introduce activities that will involve the bullies and encourage them to participate positively.
- Have discipline procedures in place that isolate the bad behaviour by removing the persistent offenders from the environment.
- Introduce and support Peer Mediation programmes to help pupils understand the ways to resolve conflict situations.
- Issues such as the movement of pupils around the campus between class, their arrival and departure from school and what they can do at lunchtime are important.

Section four: Maintenance

Staff-Pupil Staff-Staff Bullying

Because teachers work with young people it is vital that they recognise their responsibility to role model appropriate behaviour. A combative, confrontational style of teaching will encourage similar behaviour amongst the pupils.

All members of a school community have a responsibility to challenge poor behaviour, as ignoring it will ensure that it continues and thrives. It is the responsibility of school management to have clearly described accessible channels for staff to follow when they have concerns over a colleague's inappropriate behaviour.

Teacher-teacher bullying is according to the [Times Educational Supplement](#) a common occurrence. The same principles apply.

Creating a ‘telling environment’

A telling environment will be developed when adults demonstrate that they understand bullying behaviour and show that they are committed to stopping the behaviour. Young people will not tell for a [variety of reasons](#), mainly they are worried about the subsequent re-action of the bully. They are naturally fearful of retribution and are also often confused in their attitude towards the bully, who can be a dynamic, fun and attractive classmate. Teachers need to show an understanding of the issues and, rather than acting as the policeman, work constructively with the group to end the bullying behaviour. Once pupils know that the telling will result in a fair resolution they will trust the adults with information about bad behaviour.

It is important that the traditional “tale telling” myth is destroyed. A telling environment is one where all members recognise that they have responsibilities to the other members in the group and if they are aware of bullying or any other abuse they have a duty to tell.

This environment can be supported by constant attention to basic codes of behaviour and the maintenance of a co-operative, well ordered, tolerant classroom/school where pupils have the opportunity to tell, without attracting the attention of offending peers and where their actions are affirmed by the teacher taking action.

Creating opportunities for telling

- » Have ‘telling’ drop boxes for pupils to place information in.
- » Have regular opportunities for pupils to talk about what’s going on.
- » Have clearly understood, consistent, open and fair responses to bad behaviour.
- » Ensure that all members of the school community constantly reinforce the ‘telling’ message. This can include “[Plymouth School is a Narking Zone](#)” posters.

How do we handle a bullying incident at school?

It is essential that schools have clearly understood and consistently applied responses to bullying. This should include a leaflet that discusses the issue of bullying and outlines the approach the school will adopt when dealing with specific cases.

Approaches available:

The first response when made aware of any bullying behaviour is to express relief that the behaviour is out in the open and can now be dealt with. There needs to be recognition of the ‘hidden nature’ of bullying. Victims of bullying rarely seek help, as they do not want to draw attention to themselves and desperately try to present an image that they can handle it themselves. By its very nature, bullying is an abuse that targets pupils who, despite their best efforts, cannot handle the unwanted attentions of

the bully. They will often valiantly try to present a brave face, while inside they feel terrible. In the words of one British writer “Bullying is a public humiliation followed by private torment.” It is very tempting to focus on the shortcomings of the bullying victim rather than concentrating on where the immediate problem is — the behaviour of the bully.

It is also often very difficult to gain a clear understanding of exactly what has been happening. Many victims will have tried very hard to ‘handle it’ themselves and are feeling very much as though they have failed. They will lack confidence and may even blame themselves for what is going on. This confusion can be further compounded by the attitude of the bully who fails to recognise the hurt of his/her actions, regarding them as passing, often trivial incidents.

The aim of any intervention must be to stop the immediate abuse. The most effective way this can happen is to ensure that the bully changes his or her behaviour. They are the cause of the damage and the first step must always be to stop their unsafe actions. They need to be made to recognise that not only is the behaviour damaging the victim, but that the other people in the school do not like the behaviour.

Assuming the bully is motivated by a mixture of excitement, status and ‘group process’ it is important that rather than challenge the hard won status in a confrontational way we work on establishing the awareness that in actual fact the behaviour is damaging and unpopular.

1. Isolate the bullying behaviour

Remove the bully from the environment, ensuring they know why they are being excluded. This process should be accompanied with an opportunity for the bully to reflect upon the reasons for the isolation that goes beyond “Because ‘victim’ narked on me”. Asking the offender to write a letter home explaining why he/she has been isolated is a useful way of checking if they understand the reasons clearly.

2. Provide support for the victim

Ensure that the victim has access to a bully-free environment at all times. This may involve using others as supporters. These may be reliable peers, teacher aids, senior volunteers who are prepared to spend time with the isolated pupil. This can only be a short-term measure, as most victims of bullying want to be with their peer group. They are drawn to them, which is natural, as they are the peer group. Any extended time with a supporter will result in the pupil being even further removed from the group with whom they must work. It also amplifies the perception of difference that the initial bullying created.

A special safe room that has adequate staff supervision is always useful. Senior students can be rostered to work in the room, which should be an attractive quiet room. Having board games can enhance the environment.

3. Withdrawn and isolated victims

Those pupils who have experienced bullying for a long time will often have difficulty integrating with their peer group. They may have become so withdrawn and introverted that they are incapable of initiating or sustaining social contacts. While their first need is to be assured a safe environment free from the taunts of their peers, these pupils have special needs and need to have the opportunity of being involved in special programmes that will help them develop a more confident approach to life.

4. Change the behaviour of the bully:

One intervention that successfully works in this way is the “[No Blame Approach](#)” developed in Bristol, United Kingdom by university lecturer George Robinson and educational psychologist Barbara Maines. The intervention works with a group of pupils affected by the bullying behaviour. The process is a simple one whereby the bullies are confronted with the impact their behaviour has had on the victim, and the other pupils are given the opportunity to talk about what has been going on. The confrontation must be very carefully managed — it is important that no one is blamed at any stage. While the victim is not present, the teacher taking the group talks about how the victim has been feeling and will use a piece of writing, song lyric, picture or poem the victim has selected to express their feelings. This is important, as it is impossible to argue or dispute an individual’s feelings. The pupils present are asked for help. How can we make the “victim” feel better? Each participant is encouraged to come up with an inclusive strategy that will draw the isolated pupil back into the group.

The method of Shared Concern developed by Estonian psychologist Emile Pikas, adopts a similar approach, though the process works individually with each bully before pulling everyone together in a group including the victim.

Both these approaches are reliant on the support of the victim who needs to have identified that he/she is being bullied and be confident that the approach advocated will work.

5. Working with persistent offenders

There will be some pupils who find it difficult to leave behind aggressive ways of relating to other pupils. That style of relating may have been so reinforced that an ongoing programme aimed at developing prosocial skills is necessary. There are a number of agencies such as Specialist Education Services (New Zealand) <http://www.ses.org.nz> who provide specialist support schools.

6. Peer programmes

Peer mediation programmes have been successful in encouraging young people to seek help when they are in a conflict situation. These trained pupil mediators can be of tremendous support to a victim of bullying. They are an easy contact point who are trained to listen and who may encourage the bully and victim to get together to talk about what is going on. This may well result in the bully understanding the hurt he/she is causing and modifying their behaviour.

Trained mediators will be much more sympathetic to the plight of a bullied child and will be less inclined to passively stand by when others are being bullied. They can be powerful role models who provide constructive leadership in the class and school.

Whatever the approach taken, there must be a clear understanding of the bullying dynamic:

- Pupils bully to gain/cement status or power within the group.
- Bullies often have high self-images and believe that their peer group finds their behaviour attractive and exciting.
- They minimise the impact of their behaviour on others, or refuse to take the other's feelings into account.
- The active collusion of a minority and the silent acquiescence of the others reinforce the experience that bullying behaviour is a useful strategy to maintain power and influence.
- The bully may interpret teacher intervention as a direct challenge to their status. They may seek to reassert their power by seeking retribution on their victims.
- Victims of bullying are often very confused by the attentions of the bully.
- They will initially keep a low profile in a hope the abuse will stop.
- The lack of support from classmates is interpreted as hostility
- The inability to stand up for themselves can lead to feelings of helplessness, self-doubt and self-blame.
- Long term victims of bullying may become provocative victims, acting out as a defence mechanism, and thereby alienating themselves even further.
- Victims often have low status within the group and are often perceived as not helping themselves.

How do we know if we have been successful?

There are several indicators that will show the initiative has been successful:

1. An increase in 'telling'. Pupils will have confidence that adults can help change bullying behaviour, and that they don't have to put up with it.
2. A marked reduction in observable aggressive incidents in classrooms and playgrounds.
3. Greater teacher consistency in dealing with bullying incidents.
4. Reductions in other aggressive behaviours such as petty thieving and teasing.

A post intervention repeat of an earlier survey is an excellent way of measuring changes. Most follow-ups report a marked decrease in the observed incidents in bullying; though pupil surveys show an increase in the amount of bullying that they notice. This discrepancy between the observable reduction of the behaviour and the increase in pupil attention to the issue can be explained as an increased awareness resulting from the curriculum and general school wide focus on the problem.

In the Sheffield project and in reports of Dan Olweus' work in Scandinavia, well-focused school wide interventions significantly reduced bullying. The issue is brought into the open and the school gives a clear, unambiguous lead in how to deal with the behaviour. The adults in the school community act consistently and react

quickly to any case of bullying. Pupils gain the confidence to 'tell', safe in the knowledge that the resulting actions will be aimed not at antagonising the bully, but rather directed at changing the behaviour. All members of the school community increase their awareness of their individual responsibilities in maintaining a safe school, and accept that they may need to intervene when they see abuse happening.

Maintaining an anti-bullying initiative

Even the most successful initiative loses its edge over time. It is important that the issue of maintaining a safe environment be carefully linked to the school charter and retains a high priority each year.

Awareness raising exercises need to be planned for each year, with new intakes of pupils receiving special consideration. A session on the bullying policy is an essential component of new teacher induction and should be reviewed at a full staff meeting each year.

Use the initial school surveys and other more subjective methods to test the effectiveness of the programme on an annual basis. Accurate record keeping will also provide the opportunity to review procedures and to help target the hot spots around the school.

Resources/Bibliography

Intervention programmes that support the Whole School Approach:

Kia Kaha. Police Youth Education Service resource kit. Contact your local Youth Aid or police education officer.

Eliminating Violence Managing Anger, contact your local Specialist Education Services, Internet; <http://www.ses.org.nz>

Bullying don't suffer in silence (1994) Department for Education London HMSO

Mentally Healthy Schools A Safe School Intervention programme developed by the New Zealand Mental Health Foundation

Johnson, M. Munn, P & Edwards, L (1991) **Action Against Bullying A Support Pack for Schools** Edinburgh Scottish Council for Research in Education

McLean, A (1994) **Promoting Positive Relationships, Bullyproofing Our School** Glasgow, Strathclyde Education

Munn, P (1993) **School Action Against Bullying Involving Parents and Non-Teaching Staff** Edinburgh, Scottish Council for Research in Education

Robinson, G., Sleight, J & Maines, B (1995) **No Bullying Starts Today** An English one day pupil awareness training programme available from Lucky Duck Publications, 34 Wellington Park, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2UW, United Kingdom. Phone/Fax +44 117 973 2881. Email: luckyduck@dial.pipex.com

Books and Articles on Intervention Strategies

Cool Schools: Peer Mediation Programme The Foundation for Peace Studies
Aotearoa/New Zealand PO Box 4110 Auckland Fax 09 379 3017

Cowie, H. and Sharp, S. (eds.) (1996) **Peer Counselling in Schools: a time to listen**
London: David Fulton

Maines, B & Robinson, G. (1992) **Michael's Story, The No Blame Approach**
Bristol Lucky Duck

O'Rourke, M (1987) **In the Playground** Set No 2, Item 15 Wellington, NZCER

Pikas, A. **The Common Concern Method for the treatment of mobbing.** In
Roland, E. and Munthe, E. (eds.) (1989) **Bullying - An International Perspective,**
London David Fulton

Smith, P & Ahmad, Y (1990) **The Playground Jungle: Bullies, Victims, and
Intervention Strategies** Set No 1, Item 6 Wellington, NZCER

Books and Articles on Bullying

Adair, V (1998) **Ask your mother not to make you yummy sandwiches: Bullying
in New Zealand Secondary Schools** University of Auckland

Besag, V. (1989) **Bullies and Victims in Schools,** Open University Press

Besag, V. (1992) **We Don't Have Bullies Here** 57 Manor House Rd, Newcastle

Blatchford, P & Sharp, S (1994) **Breaktime and the School** London Routledge

Cleary, M. Smith, P & Sharp, S (1996) **Tackling Bullying in Schools The Findings
from Interventions** Set Special; Students at Risk, NZCER, PO Box 3237 Wellington

Dickinson, K (1992) **Teasing and Bullying Among Young High School Students**
Set No 2, Item 2 Melbourne, ACER

Elliot, M (ed) (1991) **Bullying: A practical guide to coping for Schools** London
Longman

Maxwell, G & Carroll-Lind, J (1997) **The Impact of Bullying on Children**
Wellington Office of the Commissioner for Children

Mental Health Matters (1996) A resource developed by the New Zealand Mental
Health Foundation

Olweus, D. (1993). **Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do.**
Oxford: Blackwell Publishers

Rigby, K. (1996) **Bullying in schools and what we can do about it** Melbourne: ACER.

Robinson, G & Maines, B (1997) **Crying for Help the No Blame Approach to bullying** Bristol Lucky Duck

Sharp, S & Smith, P. (1994) **Tackling Bullying in Your School** London Routledge

Sharp, S & Smith, P. (1994) **School Bullying, Insights and Perspectives** London Routledge

Helplines/Advice Agencies

0800 NO BULLY (0800 662855) An automated phone helpline that offers advice for pupils who are being bullied developed and supported by the New Zealand Police and Telecom.

Youthline 0800 376 633

Other sources of Information:

The Office of the Commissioner for Children PO Box 12537, Wellington

Ministry of Youth Affairs PO Box 10-300 Wellington

<http://www.youthaffairs.govt.nz>

New Zealand Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service (see phone book for local number)

Mental Health Foundation (refer to your local Health Authority)

Bullying Resource Links Internet

- **The Police/Telecom “Stop Bullying” website** <http://www.nobully.org.nz> offers practical advice and gives some excellent links to other anti-bullying sites.
- **Tearaway** magazine - the country's leading magazine for teenagers with a readership of 233,000 - looks at bullying and your rights, both social and legal
- **Kidscape**: Kidscape is a British charity teaching children how to keep safe before they become victims. Kidscape's message is prevention.
- **Kids Help Line Australia** has some useful 'info sheets' on information from grief, drugs, **bullying**, to suicide, family relationships, sexual abuse.
- Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario) study links **childhood bullying** with sexual harassment and violence in teens.
- **Dr Ken Rigby's Bullying Pages** provide information on resources concerned with bullying in schools in Australia. The site includes descriptions of the author's book, "Bullying in Schools and What to do About It", questionnaires for use with school children, parents and teachers, and describes the author's current research projects.

- "Taking The Bully By The Horns" is an American book aimed at helping children and young teenagers handle bullies at school. Authors Kathy Noll and Dr. Jay Carter interviewed children whom had been bullied, and came up with solutions to their problems. Some of this information is on her website, at <http://members.aol.com/kthynoll/bully.htm>. The book costs US\$9.95 (plus \$2.00 shipping & handling per book, or \$5 for 3 or more copies) and is available from Kathy Noll, 3300 Chestnut St., Reading, PA 19605, email Kthynoll@aol.com.

Code of Conduct

(Example developed in 1998 at Colenso High School, Napier, New Zealand, by Deputy Principal Geoff Shepherd and the Junior School Council)

Students' Charter

“This is our place and it belongs to all of us!”

These are our Rights:

1. We all have the right to learn without disruption.
2. We all have the right to aim for excellence and to do our personal best.
3. We all have the right to be safe.
4. We all have the right to expect our possessions to be safe.
5. We all have the right to a safe, clean environment.

These are our Responsibilities:

1. We will not interfere with the learning of others.
2. We will not stand in the way of those working to do their personal best.
3. We will not harm others either physically or emotionally and we will not allow others to do so either.
4. We will not interfere with other peoples' possessions.
5. We will care for OUR PLACE and its environment.

Curriculum work

The research is emphatic! A successful anti-bullying programme needs a “Whole School Approach”. Ownership by all staff can be reinforced through the curriculum, giving a clear signal that everyone in the school is keen to maintain a “bullyproof” environment. Classroom activities are a powerful method of maintaining the anti-bullying approach and will successfully supplement the theme that must be an ongoing component of assemblies, newsletters and public meetings.

Study the list of starter ideas and describe how each could fit into the particular curricular area, explaining how it could meet some achievement outcomes of that area. Then generate your own list of tasks and describe how each could fit into the particular area and meet achievement outcomes.

Starter ideas:

1. Survey of name-calling /bullying
2. An investigation of playground activities
3. Drama around playground conflict
4. An investigation of what students do at break times
5. Playground rules
6. An investigation of playground areas, for example the least and most preferred areas, trouble spots, sunny and shady areas

Curriculum area:

Task:

Maths

Science

Languages

The Arts

Health Physical/Wellbeing

Social Sciences

Technology

An overview of the 'No-Blame Approach' to school bullying

George Robinson, a university lecturer and Barbara Maines, an educational psychologist developed the No-Blame Approach in Bristol, United Kingdom in the early 1980s. There is an excellent review of the approach in "*Educational Psychology in Practice*" Vol. 14, No. 1 April 1998.

They have produced many excellent resources on bullying and can be contacted at Lucky Duck Publications, 34 Wellington Park, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2UW, United Kingdom Phone/Fax +44 117 973 2881 or +44 1454 776620 E-mail luckyduck@dial.pipex.com

This is a summary of the approach. For more detail contact the authors.

1. **Interview the victim.** Concentrate on supporting and congratulating the victim for confiding in you. Stress that this is the most important first step. "*Don't try to get to the bottom of it.*" Rather concentrate on convincing the victim that it is the behaviour of the other students that is aberrant, not theirs. They have done nothing wrong and they have every right to be left in peace. Discuss how it feels to be bullied, share the experience and the common human feelings of loneliness that comes from being isolated and rejected.

Tell the victim that you are going to work with the bullies and some others in the class/group to get them to understand the effect their behaviour or lack of support is having on one of their classmates. Ask the victim to suggest who they admire/look up to in the class or group and suggest that you will include them in the group discussion the next day. Ask her/him to spend some time putting down their feeling on paper that night. (Many victims of bullying start diary writing as a counter to the isolation from their peer group.) Explain that you will share these feelings with the group in an effort to end the bullying.

2. **Consult with teachers who know the peer group well** to ensure that you are able to assemble a balanced group to look at the bullying. Try to have the main bully, his/her two main supporters, one or two bystanders who have been friends of the victim in the past as well as two dominant, assertive class members who have abdicated their responsibility to stop the bullying behaviour.

3. **Convene a meeting** of this group (**do not include the victim**) allowing at least thirty minutes.

4. **Explain that there is a problem in the class/group.** That (victim's name) is very unhappy and tell of her/his feelings. Share the feelings of the victim by reading out the written work from the victim. **Don't get into details and certainly don't apportion blame.**

5. Discuss the concept of **group responsibility** if necessary and allow the group to discuss why the victim is feeling the way they are. This may lead to a larger discussion of class dynamics.

6. Each group member is then encouraged to **suggest ways the victim's problem may be solved** (i.e. made to feel happier). There is no need to solicit promises.

7. Tell the group that you will **re-convene in about a week** to discuss progress and that you are leaving it up to them to support the victim.

8. **Support the victim** by meeting them informally on a daily basis to check on progress.

Notes:

- Students will be surprised that they are not going to be punished, this leads to a more relaxed empathetic response and makes the problem solving approach much more successful.
- Do not ask the victim to do anything different (if they had the personal skill and resources to deal with the problem they would have already dealt with it). Often the victim is made to feel more helpless if asked to adopt strategies that may not work.
- Don't ask why. They will be unable to explain, and may become more alienated, demotivated or anti-social if challenged. The raising of levels of empathy is crucial.
- Avoid labelling the participants, as talk of victim and bully will reinforce the power imbalance that is an essential part of the bullying relationship. Bullying is a behaviour not a personality.
- Separate stopping the bullying behaviour, from addressing specific incidents such as assaults. The No-Blame approach deals with the behaviour, specific violent acts need to be dealt with formally in accordance with the law.

Bullying - What can parents do?

Take it seriously, but stay calm. *Avoid being:*

- **the cynic** - 'no need to get upset'
- **the martyr** - 'that's nothing, when I was...'
- **the brick wall** - 'not giving a chance to explain'
- **the interrogator** - 'I want to know everything'
- **the bully** - 'stick up for yourself'
- **the rescuer** - 'leave it to me'

More helpful responses: *Try being:*

- **The listener** not jumping to conclusions
- **The clarifier** investigate patiently
- **The supporter** seeing their side

Let your child know:

- ⇒ *that you are pleased they have told you,*
- ⇒ *that you believe them,*
- ⇒ *that it is not their fault and you're sorry it has happened.*

Plymouth School is a Narking Zone!

Pupils at Plymouth School know that “**TELLING**” someone about dangerous behaviour is the best way of **everyone** keeping safe. Telling will help the person misbehaving change their behaviour and to keep out of trouble.

At this school we all understand that we have the right to be safe and as well have the responsibility of looking after each other. This means that if we see someone being picked on, repeatedly teased or bullied we know that we have a duty to help this stop.

While we know it's better if we can sort it out ourselves, we also know that involving the teachers and other adults are good ways of solving the problem.

Keeping quiet makes sure that the bad behaviour keeps happening!

Role play scenarios

A group of senior boys 'wolf whistle' as Helen walks past them in the corridor.

Carol was teased by her friend about a boy liking her.

A group of boys were continually putting each other down.

Katrina decided that no one was to speak to Tracey.

James chased Susan around the playground demanding a kiss.

The teacher didn't realise that the tune the students hummed every day upset Reece.

Angela took Mary's lunch money from her, brought herself some lunch and gave Mary back 10 cents change.

Karen's friend told her that she needed to go on a diet.

Brian's friends marked his birthday with the usual 'put downs'.

The teacher uses sarcasm to manage the class.

The principal runs the school in a bossy way, pulling rank whenever challenged by staff.

The way the caretaker yells at the students terrifies them.

At interval the others would not let Dylan join in, claiming that he always spoils everything.

Two boys had a scrap in the grounds.

Mr Wilson constantly told his son that he was useless.

Peter, the natural leader, criticised anyone who spoiled the game.

Gary forced his way to the front of the canteen queue every day, shoving anyone who was in his way.

The others constantly hassle Fiona to tidy up quickly so that the group will get more points.

A group of senior students make fun of the student teacher.

Categorise the above scenarios under one of three headings:

Definitely bullying. **Could be bullying.** **Definitely not bullying.**

Running a Parent Evening on bullying

A parent session is a key component in developing a comprehensive anti-bullying climate in the school. Parents are often the first people to become aware of a bullying incident and they need to be educated on how to deal with the problem. Often a bullying information evening will attract parents who are aware of an existing problem and will want immediate support and advice. The team needs to be sure they are able to provide advice and ideally written information.

The co-ordinating group needs to have a number of clear outcomes they expect from the meeting. These could be:

1. To establish parent-school communication about bullying.
2. To clarify what parents and the school can do about bullying.
3. To involve parents in developing a definition and a school policy on bullying.

Allow for a two-hour session. Opening up a positive dialogue with parents and giving them the opportunity to be involved in the development of a school policy will enable them to better help children alleviate the problem.

Parents need to gain a clear view of the nature and signs of bullying and the effects of the behaviour. They should become more willing to report bullying if they understand that the school finds the behaviour unacceptable. Various ways of supporting bullied children are explored.

The programme should allow for the discussion of parental concerns as well as working through four key topics:

- What do you think about bullying?
- What is bullying?
- Why does it happen?
- What can I do?

A parent information sheet should also be provided to give to parents as they leave the meeting.

Programme Outline:

Overview:

Use an outside 'expert' or a knowledgeable staff-member to provide a brief overview of bullying. This may include relevant statistics from the school and international surveys. Stress that bullying has always happened in schools and is an inevitable behaviour wherever young people get together. Emphasise that because of recent scientific studies it is now clear that school communities can reduce bullying if they target the behaviour. **This part needs to be brief and it is useful to conclude with a general definition of bullying.**

Discussion: What is bullying?

Issue the sheet [Bullying Scenarios](#) and ask the parents to choose the incident that would worry them the most and then the one that would worry them the least. A brief forum will allow parents to discuss the issues raised and to ask questions.

Then working in groups of between 4-8 issue the discussion cards [What is bullying?](#) It helps if the earlier definition of bullying is available either on an overhead transparency or as a handout. Allocate a staff member to join each group as they nearly complete the exercise. This allows the groups some time to discuss the issues in a wider forum.

Forum

Once the majority of groups have been able to categorise the scenarios, re-form the meeting and discuss one or two of the difficult cases, drawing on developing the definition. Move onto the idea of dealing with the difficulty that most victims do not tell and using the information [Why is it is hard to tell](#), begin to look at developing support strategies. If time allows, the information contained in 'why is it so hard to tell' can be used as a group activity with each reason being a card and the members of the group ranking them from the reason they think most bullied students would give to the least likely reason.

Conclusion

Use the overhead [Bullying, what can parents do](#) to sum up the evening and invite interested parents to join a working party.

An alternative strategy is to use a group of senior drama students who have worked through the bullying issues to present a role-play workshop. The students could role-play each of the nine scenarios and then facilitate the subsequent discussion. For this to work it is essential that some time is spent working through the issues with the students before the meeting.

Safe Places at School

As part of the development of a comprehensive safe school, it is important that the school provides supervised places for 'vulnerable' pupils to go to during break times. This may be opening up a computer facility during lunchtime that is supervised by a staff-member, or it might involve establishing an activity room where pupils can play board games secure in the knowledge that a teacher is present.

These places can be used to arrange for older pupils to contact the lonely or vulnerable pupils. The seniors can also be used to help supervise the room during the summer terms, when a teacher is not needed. The 'games room' will become a neutral place where senior pupils are able to actively support bullied pupils in a natural, uncontrolled way.

Safe School Policy

Rationale:

As well as having a charter obligation (NAG #5) to provide a “*Safe physical and emotional environment*” for all its pupils, _____ School has an unequivocal commitment to ensuring the all round safety of pupils and staff.

Purpose:

To ensure that Charter Goals 4.3-4.5 inclusive and relevant objectives are specifically dealt with so that **all** members of the school community are supported by practices that are conducive to a safe physical and emotional environment.

Goal 4.3 *To provide a caring supportive environment for all individuals and groups within the school.*

Objectives

1. To maintain a strong guidance and pastoral care network.
2. To ensure that as far as possible within the school's ability to resource, students are not prevented from acquiring an excellent education through factors either personal or physical that will mitigate against it.
3. To employ a full time guidance counsellor.
4. To provide programmes that help students develop appropriate social skills.

Goal 4.4 *To ensure that practices seek to achieve equality of opportunity for students of both sexes, for rural and urban students and for students of all ethnic, cultural, religious and social backgrounds, regardless of any ability or disability.*

Objectives

1. No course will exclude the participation of students on the basis of gender.
2. The school will provide opportunities for extra curricular activities for all students regardless of background and/or gender.
3. The school will actively promote extra curricular opportunities for all students especially those with special abilities or needs.
4. To regularly review student participation in all school activities, identifying barrier to participation and developing strategies to rectify these blocks.
5. To provide suitable induction and on-going support programmes for students who have English as a second language.

Goal 4.5 *To identify and remove barriers to achievement.*

Objectives

- 1 To provide a safe and secure learning environment by the promotion of programmes that enhance self esteem and actively discourage bullying, violent or sexist behaviours.

Bullying Sub Policy

SUB-POLICY :: BULLYING

RATIONALE

As part of its overall Safe School Policy _____ School actively seeks to provide an environment that is safe from all forms of intimidation.

PURPOSE

To provide a comprehensive, universally understood definition of bullying behaviour and to outline strategies for all members of the school community to combat social, emotional, physical and all other forms of intimidation.

DEFINITION

After a series of parent, staff and student meetings the following definition of bullying was adopted:

Bullying usually has three common features:

- » it is deliberate, hurtful behaviour
- » it is repeated often over a period of time
- » it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

There are three main types of bullying:

- » *physical*; hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- » *verbal*; name-calling, insulting, racist remarks
- » *indirect*; spreading nasty stories, excluding from groups

GUIDELINES

- All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying and to take action when they are aware of it happening.
- An anti-bullying programme will be run with each Year 9 class each year. This will be supported by school-wide messages on the issue and a parent information evening.
- All staff should treat any report of bullying seriously and take action. A staff meeting will be held annually to discuss the issue and review strategies and remedial approaches.
- Staff should first listen to the student or students, and make such enquiries as may be necessary to clarify exactly what has been happening.
- The student(s) should be assured that they have acted correctly in reporting the bullying.

- The staff member should make a written summary of the information and pass it on to the form teacher, Dean, Counsellor or DP as appropriate.
- The emphasis must be on changing the behaviour of the bullying student(s), while providing support for the student(s) whom has been harassed.
- The staff member should attempt to give advice on how to deal with any repeat incidents that may happen before the intimidation can be dealt with.
- Follow up should be discussed with the student. It is important that the staff member checks a week or so later with both the student and the person to whom the information was sent.
- An effort should be made to contact the parents of all involved students.

Dated _____

Review Date _____

POLICY :: DISCIPLINE

RATIONALE

While _____ School aims to develop self-discipline in students, there is a recognition that there will be occasions when, to provide a safe secure learning environment for all of its students, a clearly understood discipline structure is necessary.

PURPOSES

To provide an orderly environment in which students can learn without interference by others and teachers can teach.

To encourage students to develop respect for other people and for their environment.

To assure parents and the community that the school is a safe, orderly environment.

GUIDELINES

- All staff are responsible for developing and maintaining good discipline in their classroom management and in their general involvement around the school.
- Staff will follow the school wide discipline procedures as noted in the staff manual.

- Staff will refer events/behaviours causing concern, on to the relevant form Deans, Form Teachers and/or others who may have an involvement.
- The school has a progressive discipline structure with a system that uses Form Teachers, Deans, Heads of Departments and Senior Managers who are available to support other staff.
- Any breach of discipline that involves violence or involvement with drugs must be referred to the Deputy Principal, or if unavailable, a Senior Manager.
- The Principal may suspend students indefinitely, pending a Board Disciplinary Sub-Committee meeting which must be held within 7 days to consider the extension of that suspension. (See MOE Suspension guidelines and the Act)
- The Deans will report students causing concern to the weekly guidance meeting.
- In the case of a serious breach of discipline or a certain pattern of misbehaviour becoming obvious, the Dean (or Senior Manager) will contact the student's caregiver.

Dated _____

Review Date _____

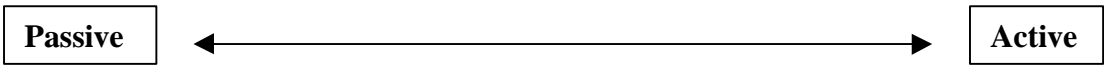
Survey Archive

Most bullying surveys are based on the model developed by the Swedish Psychologist, Dan Olweus. His survey is included in his 1993 book *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

An adaptation of the Olweus survey is used in an Australian study Dickinson, K (1992) **Teasing and Bullying Among Young High School Students** Set No 2, Item 2 Melbourne ACER.

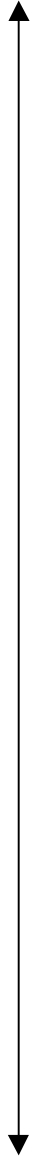
Another more recent Australian version has been developed by [Dr Ken Rigby](#) University of South Australia ([visit his informative Internet site](#)).

Specialist Education Services have gathered extensive and professional data as part of their comprehensive programme, **Eliminating Violence Managing Anger**, (contact your local Specialist Education Services or visit them on the Internet at <http://www.ses.org.nz>).



ASSERTIVE

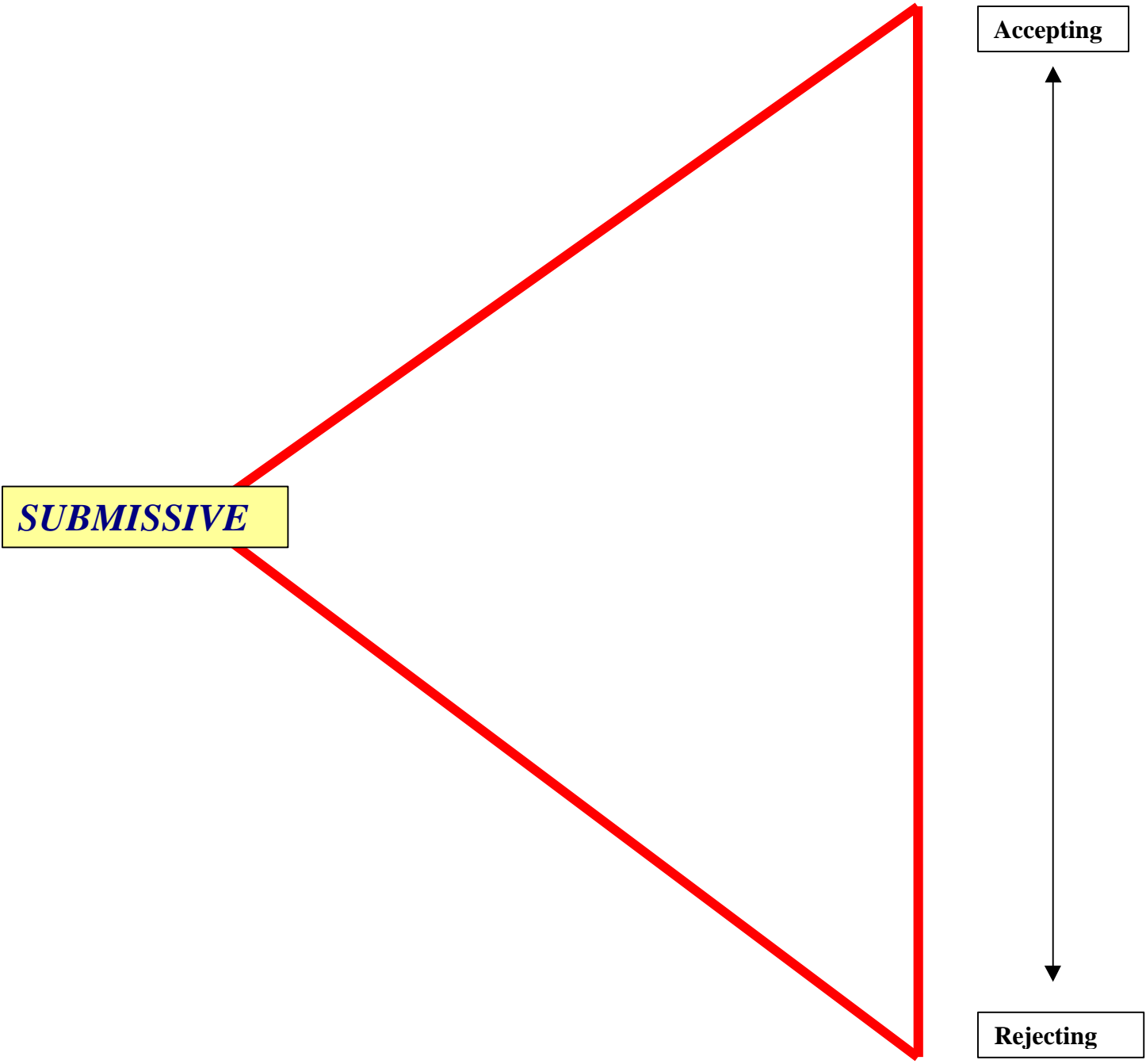
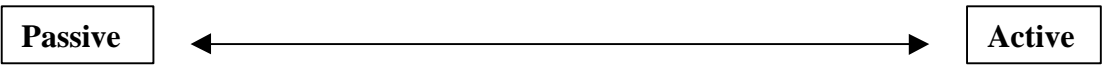
Accepting



Rejecting

SUBMISSIVE

AGGRESSIVE



Bullying - What can parents do?

Take it seriously, but stay calm. *Avoid being:*

- **the cynic** - 'no need to get upset'
- **the martyr** - 'that's nothing, when I was...'
- **the brick wall** - 'not giving a chance to explain'
- **the interrogator** - 'I want to know everything'
- **the bully** - 'stick up for yourself'
- **the rescuer** - 'leave it to me'

More helpful responses: *Try being:*

- **The listener** not jumping to conclusions
- **The clarifier** investigate patiently
- **The supporter** seeing their side

Let your child know:

- ⇒ *that you are pleased they have told you,*
- ⇒ *that you believe them,*
- ⇒ *that it is not their fault and you're sorry it has happened.*

What is bullying? - Scenarios

Read the following situations and chose:

- The one which would concern you the most.*
- The one which would worry you the least.*

1. Sally enjoyed the distress Luana felt from the constant name-calling.
2. Karen become so upset by her friends' remarks about her needing to go on a diet that she ended up overeating.
3. Regan in his seventh day at the new school was punched by a year 10 (form 4) girl who had been told by a year 11(form 5) student that he (Regan) was a racist.
4. Kristy was called names every morning on the school bus but couldn't see any way to avoid it or tell anyone because of the threats.
5. The two boys talked for a long time about the worst names they could call Scott to drive him out of the school.
6. Polly was concerned when she was told that her name-calling had made Trudy so ill she had to stay off school.
7. When Helen was in a bad mood, usually because of what was happening at home, she would make personal remarks about anyone whom was unlucky enough to annoy her.
8. Sally left the school on the second morning in tears because her new classmates had told her "to go back to England you bitch."
9. Now that John's mates had left school, Michael was glad he could get his own back for all the times that John had called him names.

Most worrying



Least worrying

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Where to from here

A planning group is essential to ensure the process is followed through. This needs to include at least one member of the senior management team. It needs to assume responsibility for:

1. Awareness Raising:

Staff; The momentum needs to be maintained. Use newsletters, meetings etc.
Senior students; Raise the issue at assembly; peer support, drama role-plays
Parents; Co-ordinate a parent evening to raise awareness, involve in policy.
BOT (Board of Trustees); Will need to ratify policy. A short anti-bullying presentation is useful.

2. Policy Development

A small group needs to draft a discussion policy on bullying. This will need to gain the support of staff and obviously the BOT. Three fundamental questions need to be answered:

- a) What is bullying?
- b) What will we do to stop it occurring?
- c) What will we do when it happens?

This policy needs to address the specific responsibilities of all members of the school community when aware of bullying. Staff record keeping procedures and referral structures need to be explicit.

3. Curriculum Intervention

The method of raising the awareness of junior students must be planned. The best curriculum resource is the Police Youth Education Service resource ***Kia Kaha***. Key questions to be decided:

Who delivers the programme? Curriculum teachers, Form Teachers, Health team.

When is it delivered? A special one-day programme or a series of lessons.

4. School-wide support to the junior programme

Poster competition
Assembly role-plays
Writing competition
Telling environment theme

5. Senior Student Involvement

Organising the use of senior students as contact points for juniors.

Peer support leaders - Peer tutors, Peer helpers, Games rooms helpers, Support groups led by seniors for minority groups.

6. The environment

Identification of areas considered unsafe by students
Providing 'safe' activities for victimised students
Addressing duty issues
Opening special facilities for at risk students

Why is it so hard to tell?

	per 100 bullied children
1. fear of them getting back	42
2. not wanting to be a 'tell tale'	41
3. not wanting to worry parents	34
4. shame at not being able to stick up for self	31
5. fear of losing friends	29
6. hard to prove	29
7. no confidence in adults keeping name out of it	25
8. fear of what parents might say	25
9. mixed up and confused	25
10. something I can't change	24
11. unable to put feelings into words	23
12. parents don't understand school life	23
13. accept as something to put up with	22
14. feel no-one will believe me	20
15. not wanting to get them into trouble	19
16. not wanting to show not popular	16
17. not seeing it as bullying	16
18. blame myself	15
19. I deserve it	7

Reasons for not telling given by pupils who had been bullied, but had not sought help.
Source Strathclyde LEA "Building Better Relationships -Bullyproof Your School"

SELF-ESTEEM & PROSOCIAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Eliminating Violence - Managing Anger Programme, Specialist Education Services

Kia Kaha A New Zealand Police Youth Education Service resource kit

Dare to Make a Choice, Tena Kowhiria, and other D.A.R.E. Foundation programmes delivered by the New Zealand Police Youth Education Service

Cool Schools Peer Mediation A programme developed by the Foundation for Peace Studies

Keeping Ourselves Safe A New Zealand Police personal safety and violence prevention programme for primary and secondary schools