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4 Bullying Unit 4.1PC	
Title	Including parents/carers in reviewing and developing an anti-bullying policy
Level	Getting started
Audience	Staff involved with parent/carer groups Parents and carers
Purpose	• To raise the awareness of staff who have responsibility for policy review of the importance of consulting and collaborating with parents/carers • To ensure the effective input of parents/carers in developing an effective anti-bullying policy
Possible use	Staff involved with parent/carer groups should: • discuss at meetings and disseminate the unit to parents/carers; • plan the introduction of strategies, approaches and resources to aid effective review and generate ideas on 'what else could we do?'
Impact can be measured by	• increased involvement of parents and carers with school staff in general consultations and in referrals; • number of referrals to other agencies reduced.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Everyday policies Links with partners and other agencies
Links to other material in this section	Staff: Getting started 4.1S Reviewing a whole-school anti-bullying policy Pupils: Getting started 4.1P Including pupils in reviewing a whole-school bullying policy This unit relates to all other parent/carer units in this section.
Reference to other resources	*Behaviour and attendance training materials: Core day 1* and *Core day 2* (DfES 0055-2004) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence* (DfES 0064/2000) *Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 2003) *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) *Handbook for inspecting secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) *Index for Inclusion* Booth T, Ainscow M, Black-Hawkins K, Vaughan M, Shaw L Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE), 2000, ISBN 1 872001 82 3

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Including parents/carers in reviewing and developing an anti-bullying policy

Introduction

A school with a strong anti-bullying culture cannot be created by working in isolation. Effective schools recognise that a policy will have greater impact if it is developed in collaboration with all those who will implement and benefit from it. The importance of consultation and communication is vital and was explored in Reviewing and implementing policy (*Behaviour and attendance training materials: Core day 1,* September 2003). If a policy is to be supported, owned and consistently applied, it must be developed and reviewed by everyone in the school community.

Involving parents/carers can sometimes be difficult. For example, some may be apprehensive about coming to school or hold a belief that they have no influence and therefore that their contribution is pointless. They may have developed a resistance or complacency towards the possibility of solving problems associated with bullying.

Parents/carers may have had experiences with bullying (or have been upset by events in their own lives or the lives of their children) which cause them to feel emotional. They will not have the professional detachment of staff in school.

Primary schools have an established culture of involving parents/carers. However, in secondary schools, parental contact with schools sometimes diminishes as children move through the key stages. To help combat this, it is essential that schools develop a culture where parents/carers feel valued, welcome and included.

Consider the following.

- What measures does your school take to welcome parents/carers beyond the school gate?
- Are parents/carers always aware of how meetings in school are conducted?
- Do you make arrangements to support parents/carers who have younger children with them?
- Are meetings purposeful yet relaxed? For example, are parents/carers offered tea or coffee?
- Do you always ensure that meetings are followed up with either a letter or telephone call or both?

Schools may wish to undertake surveys/questionnaires and analyse their own school audits to help ascertain the views of parents/carers and then use those views to work towards making the school a more welcoming place for parents and carers.

Bringing large numbers of parents/carers into school can be a logistical challenge, not least because of the time constraints on staff and parents/carers. Even if you run a successful and well-attended workshop, it is likely that some consultation will take place beyond the school gates and/or with a smaller group of parents/carers.

Make sure at the outset that parents/carers have a copy of the school's anti-bullying policy and understand how it relates to the values and principles the school wants to impart to the whole-school community.

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Establishing the success criteria

Activity 1

Before embarking on the review, consider what you want to achieve. **Resource sheet 1** shows how Ofsted judges the effectiveness of links with parents/carers. The sheet is generic, but the activity needs to be focused on issues relating specifically to bullying. Use the table to reflect upon judgements that you have made in this area through school self-evaluation or any external reports you have received. Grade yourself as staff using 'S' and how you feel parents/carers may view your effectiveness using 'P'. Make brief notes to support your judgements.

Reflect upon your grades.

- Did your judgements match how you think parents/carers perceive the school?
- Where there are differences, why do you think this is?
- What evidence have you gathered already to support your views?
- Are there any particular groups of parents/carers who you feel may view the school's policy more negatively than others?
- How did you engage the parents/carers who are positive about the links with the school?
- What actions will you take to liaise with other groups?

Including parents/carers

Bullying is an emotive and painful issue for many, so it is vital to acknowledge and welcome all contributions and be particularly sensitive to comments which might suggest dissatisfaction.

Activity 2 (for SLT)

Resource sheet 2 shows some ways in which schools can improve their liaison with parents and carers. Consider the strategies listed and indicate whether the school already employs any of these. If the response is 'no', could they be introduced?

Ask parents/carers for their views on ways to make them feel more informed and included. Plan the next consultation based on their feedback. Also, gain parents'/carers' views on how to involve as wide a range of parents/carers in the process as possible.

Communication and consultation

Ofsted teams ask the question 'Do parents and pupils feel that the school deals effectively with bullying and racial harassment?' Effective schools also seek to establish whether parents/carers feel that the school takes appropriate action to deal with incidents. To answer this question, some of the policy review will be conducted by parents/carers and staff working together. Focus groups may be set up in a variety of ways, for example:

- by using existing curriculum or behaviour and attendance groups;
- through the PTA or governing body;
- through community action or link services;
- by inviting parents/carers to volunteer their involvement as a result of a personal experience or interest;

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- by inviting support with the review from those parents/carers who have reported bullying. This will include parents/carers who feel satisfied with the outcome and those who feel that the situation was not resolved. A school which uses methods that focus on solutions will find this a useful approach.

This kind of communication and direct consultation is useful and reinforces the capacity that parents/carers have to reflect on school practices.

Activity 3 (for parents/carers)

Use **Resource sheet 3** as a prompt for discussion with a focus group of parents/carers working on the anti-bullying policy review. This list of features is taken from the Ofsted document, *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools*. Responses to this resource sheet can be the starting point for discussion and also help staff to identify where there is common concern. Encourage constructive suggestions for the 'Evidence' column, as these ideas are a positive contribution to a future policy.

Activity 4

Resource sheets 4a and 4b contain posters displaying common statements about bullying. They can be used to generate discussion in a parents'/carers' focus group. To get going, you could ask participants, in pairs, to discuss one statement to feed into the whole group. The statements will help participants to look beyond specific incidents to some of the underlying causes of bullying.

The following questions may be useful to structure or deepen the initial discussion.

- How do we manage a pupil who bullies at present?
- What successful experiences have we had in managing bullying behaviour?
- What hasn't worked well for us in following up this behaviour?
- What could we or should we do in future?
- Can we see any steps we should take each time a pupil who bullies is identified?
- Can we see any steps we should consider each time a pupil who bullies is identified?
- What can or should parents/carers do when their child has been identified as a pupil who bullies?

As a further task, it would be useful to explore the match between the statements made and the core values and principles used to review and develop policy (see *Behaviour and attendance training materials: Core day 1,* session 1). A successful anti-bullying policy is firmly linked to the values, principles and high expectations that form the basis of the school's behaviour and attendance policy.

As a second part of the activity, using Resource sheet 4b to generate discussion, discuss the questions above, but from the point of view of pupils who are bullied.

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Summary

By the end of this unit:

- parents/carers will have a better knowledge and understanding about the underlying causes of bullying;
- parents/carers will have expressed their views on the school's current approaches and made an active contribution to future policy development.

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Resource sheet 1

Judgement	Comments	Where might you be? (S) Where might parents/carers place you? (P) (Note evidence to support your grade)
Very good (2)	The school works very effectively. Parents/carers feel a strong sense of partnership based on mutual trust and confidence in the school. They are consulted extensively and their views are taken into account to bring about improvement. Any complaints are resolved very effectively and sensitively.	
Good (3)	Good communication keeps parents/carers informed. The school regularly seeks parents' and carers' views, including making effective efforts to communicate with those parents/carers who may be difficult to reach. Procedures for dealing with complaints are business-like and effective.	
Satisfactory (4)	Parents and carers receive essential information about the school. The parents'/carers' views are sought on some important issues and they are satisfied with how the school consults them and how it responds. Complaints are dealt with fairly and promptly using clear procedures.	
Unsatisfactory (5)	Unsatisfactory communication with parents and carers leaves many unclear about and/or dissatisfied with what the school provides. Some parents/carers know too little about the school's procedures. A significant minority believe their views are not heard. Complaints are dealt with inefficiently or slowly.	

Use any available information, such as surveys/questionnaires and audits, to help ascertain the views of parents/carers.

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Resource sheet 2

Ten ways to include parents and carers in the review process	**Examples**	**Does the school do this already?**
Acknowledge the value of their involvement: people are more likely to repeat the action if it has been noticed and positive feedback has been given.	Send a 'thank you' postcard or telephone any parent or carer who completes a questionnaire.	
Give feedback quickly and clearly on the latest developments resulting from parental involvement.	Use existing newsletters and leaflets to highlight how instrumental parents and carers can be in bringing about change.	
Use open evenings or days to discuss views on the policy.	Highlight key messages of the policy on posters and noticeboards and invite comments verbally or on 'polling slips'.	
Give parents/carers the **big picture** about the place of the anti-bullying policy in the school.	Feature the anti-bullying policy in a special letter home or include with reports.	
Ensure that the school website has the facility for parents/ carers to log their views on the policy.	Draw attention to a dedicated postbox on the site for comments to be made in response to prompts.	
Invite the parent governors to use their networks to consult with a group of parents/carers.	Include on the meeting agenda and ask for support with contacting other parents and carers.	
Facilitate a workshop in the school or local venue specifically to explore views on the policy.	Invite parents/carers to session(s) at a range of times where they can easily contribute to views.	
Organise a confidential 'postbox' at the entrance to the school which parents/carers can use to express views.	Publicise via pupils and newsletters and suggest that pupils can post the responses on behalf of parents/carers.	
Ask attendance officers or mentors to explore concerns or views about bullying when contacting parents/carers.	Use existing contacts and home/ school liaison to expand on views.	
Give plenty of notice that a policy review is going to take place.	Advertise the review in local offices and shops with colourful posters and information. A simple message – 'Help us to stop bullying' – suggests that involvement is wanted and needed.	

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Resource sheet 3

Features of good practice	Is this feature clear in our policy?	Is this aspect of the policy visible in school?	What evidence do we have that this aspect of the policy impacts on practice? What improvements could be made?
The policy makes it explicit that bullying thrives where incidents are not reported.			*If asked, pupils can say that you should talk to a member of staff or parent/carer if you're being bullied.*
It is clear that any kind of harassment is not tolerated.			*Parents/carers and pupils know that the school will respond to reports.*
Pupils, parents/carers and staff understand what is meant by bullying.			*Discussion reveals that there is an awareness of the different forms in which bullying appears.*
Reporting systems are understood.			*The school monitors the reporting of incidents to assess the clarity and ease of the process.*
Reporting systems minimise the risk of making things worse.			*There are few cases of parents/carers saying that reporting an incident has led to their child being bullied further.*
All allegations of bullying are investigated and, if confirmed, they are acted upon, with clear procedures and sanctions specified and applied consistently.			*The school log shows actions and outcomes with timings.*
Records of incidents and the outcomes of investigations are used to inform review and planning.			*The records are analysed, evaluated and collated, at least termly, for presentation at reviews.*
The means of supporting those bullied includes the involvement of their peers. The pupil who bullies is supported to change his/her behaviour.			*Peer mentoring/counselling systems or support groups are in place.* *Mentoring support is arranged with a trusted adult on a regular, timetabled basis.*
There are procedures to punish the behaviour of the pupil who bullies and reduce the likelihood of the incident recurring.			*Sanctions are related to the incident and include an element of education to reduce incidents in the future.*
The curriculum includes programmes that build self-esteem, self-confidence and responsible assertiveness.			*Parents/carers can see from pupils' work that bullying-related issues are covered in lessons.*
The policy is communicated frequently and reviewed regularly.			*Parents/carers, pupils and staff understand that reviewing the policy is a matter of good practice and not a reaction to specific incidents.*

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Resource sheet 4a

What do you think?

Pupils who bully need help.

Some pupils who bully are bringing community tensions or family feuds into school.

Pupils who bully can be in any year group and come from any background.

Pupils who bully can be of any ability.

Research suggests that half the pupils who bully have been bullied themselves.

Male pupils who bully are twice as likely to be in trouble with the police as their peers.

Some pupils who bully are using fighting and threatening behaviour as a way of coping with their own problems.

Some pupils who bully believe that it is the only way to show you can stick up for yourself.

Some pupils who bully are influenced by subcultures which suggest that bullying behaviour is normal.

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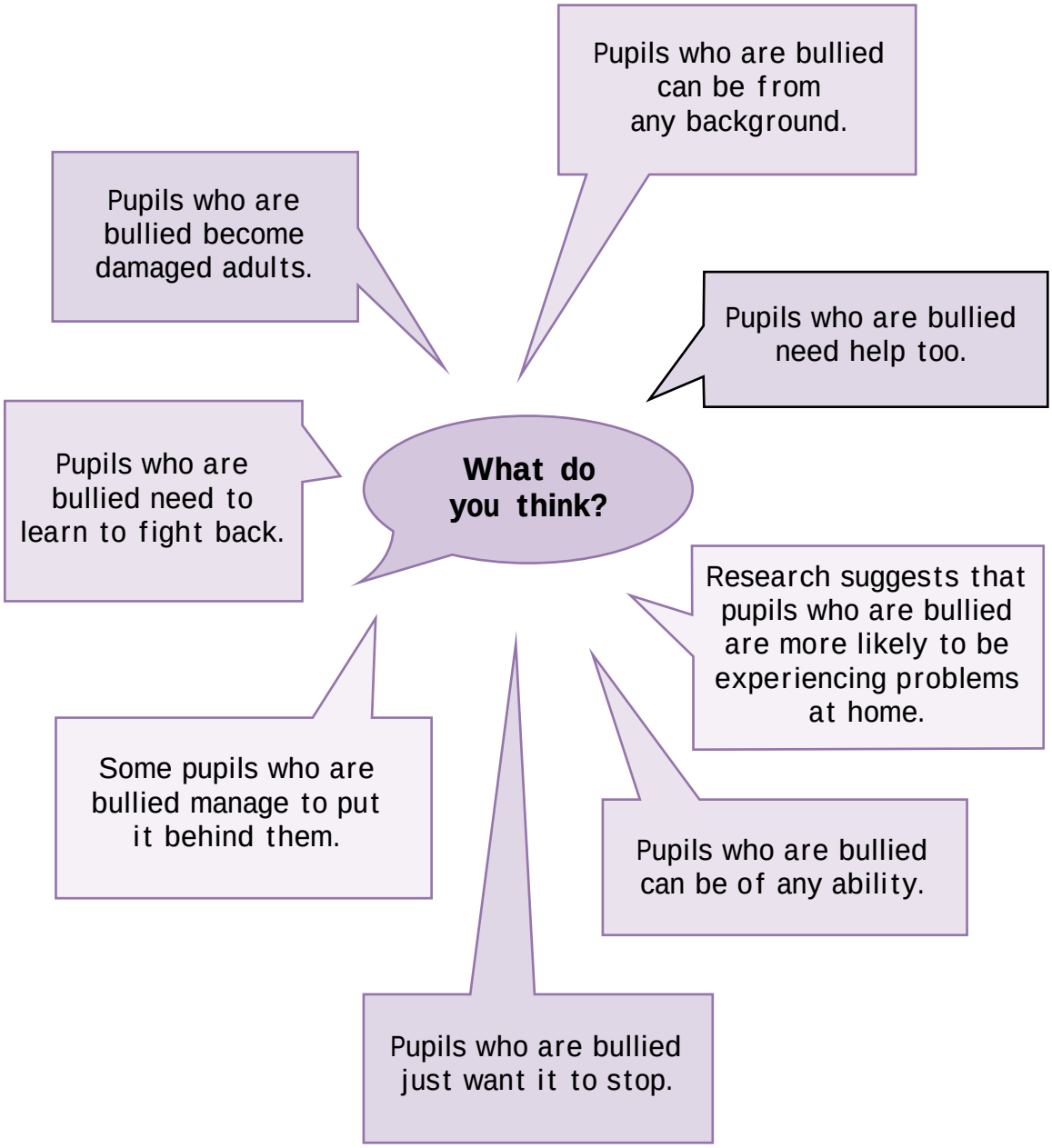
Resource sheet 4b



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4 Bullying Unit 4.2PC	
Title	Developing the parent/carer role in helping to reduce bullying in school
Level	Developing good practice
Audience	Parents/carers
Purpose	To support parents/carers in their role in reducing bullying by: • providing clear guidance on how they can help in specific ways • planning a workshop for parents/carers that provides opportunities for them to voice their concerns and contribute ideas
Possible use	The materials can be used to prompt discussion at a parent/carer workshop on: • existing practice in the school; • emotional issues that may arise for parents/carers when dealing with bullying incidents; • the role they can take in reducing bullying in school. This unit will require skilled facilitation.
Impact can be measured by	• parents/carers more actively involved in supporting the school's efforts to reduce and prevent bullying.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Leadership and management Pupil support systems Links with partners and other agencies
Links to other material in this section	Staff: Developing good practice 4.2S Establishing the staff role in helping to reduce bullying in school Pupils: developing good practice 4.2P Developing the pupil role in helping to reduce bullying in school
Reference to other resources	*Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 2003) *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools* (DfES 0064/2000) www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying www.dontsufferinsilence.com www.parentlineplus.org.uk www.kidscape.org.uk www.antibullying.net/parents.htm

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Developing the parent/carer role in helping to reduce bullying in school

Introduction

> *Parents of a victim of bullying naturally want action to be taken, and on occasion, this can seem like a desire for revenge. Working with parents who have strong feelings about those who bully their children can be very difficult, but unless parents are fully included in the process, there can be a serious breakdown of confidence between them and the school.*
> *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003)

In all instances of bullying, whether their child is being bullied or is engaged in bullying behaviour themselves, parents and carers need to be involved and included in actions. Including and involving parents/carers in helping the school reduce bullying is more likely to be effective when there are opportunities for informal discussion and exploration. For example, schools that regularly offer parent/carer workshops have found this forum useful to explore the parent role.

Developing the role of parents through parent/carer workshops

When setting up parent/carer workshops, the first task is to make the purpose of the workshop clear to all who are going to be involved. Decide whether there is going to be an open invitation or whether the focus will be on parents/carers of pupils who have been involved in bullying incidents. Where these workshops are most successful, staff who facilitate them are clear about the school's anti-bullying policy and are able to communicate its aims and processes positively. Such staff also have well-developed interpersonal and communication skills, and confidence in managing emotional situations that may occur.

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Activity 1
Planning the workshop

Consider the aims of the workshop and how you will include everyone in working together to develop the parent/carer role in reducing bullying in school. Consider how you will identify the intended audience and publicise the workshop, perhaps via parent governors, newsletters, posters and discussions with pupils.

Skilled facilitators ensure parents/carers feel comfortable and confident in what may for some be an emotional setting. Consider who are the most appropriate staff to run the workshop – this may include staff from LEA services. Successful facilitators ensure parents/carers are clear about the purpose of the workshop activity and the benefits it might bring.

Using the statements on **Resource sheet 1** (or tailoring them to your environment) consider:

- how these statements could be used to promote initial discussion on the feelings experienced in bullying situations;
- how the facilitator might support the group to acknowledge and share these feelings and to reassure parents/carers that they are not alone in these situations;
- how the facilitator might safely encourage parents/carers to consider their own experiences of bullying, in particular the roles and responsibilities of those involved.

Consider how you as a school might respond to the parents/carers in each of these statements, for example:

- what are the roles and responsibilities of those involved?
- are your responses in line with school policy?
- do parents/carers feel supported?

You might conclude the activity by identifying and discussing aspects of the parents'/carers' role in reducing bullying in school that have emerged and can be taken forward.

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Activity 2
Exploring the role of parents/carers

Consider how you might adapt **Resource sheet 3** (part 1) to promote discussion on Ben's story (**Resource sheet 2**)

- What are the facts? (What is going on in this situation?)
- What might the roles and responsibilities of the parent/carer be in these situations?
- How might parents/carers be feeling in this situation and how might those feelings influence their actions?
- What skills might parents/carers find useful?

Consider how you might adapt **Resource sheet 3** (part 2) to help parents/carers move on from reflecting on the general points in the scenarios to clarifying:

- actions they might take to support their own child in a bullying situation;
- their role in supporting the school to reduce bullying.

Activity 3
Concluding the workshop

Consider how the facilitator ensures parents/carers leave the workshop feeling positive and confident about how they can support their own child and play an active role in reducing bullying in school.

Use or adapt **Resource sheet 4** for parents/carers attending the workshop to take away (or to use in other ways appropriate to your school context, for example, sent out with details of the anti-bullying policy).

Summary

By the end of this unit parents/carers will:

- understand the role they can play in reducing bullying;
- know what action they can take to support their own child in a bullying situation;
- know how they can support the school in helping to reduce bullying.

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Resource sheet 1

Knowing that my child might be involved in bullying another pupil makes me feel very angry and frustrated. What can I do? I feel completely hopeless.
I have been told that my child has been involved in bullying. I feel I have done something wrong. I must be a really bad parent.
If I approach the school because I think my child is being bullied, the staff might think I am being foolish and overprotective.
My child is being bullied but he thinks that if I complain to the school it will get worse.

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Resource sheet 2

Ben's story

Ben was in his first term of secondary school when his mum began to realise that something was wrong. He was normally quiet and placid, but had started to fly into uncontrollable rages over the most trivial things, for example, a request to tidy his room or a minor disagreement with his sister. He would burst into tears at the slightest criticism and shut himself away in his bedroom. His mum tried to talk to him but Ben refused to engage in any conversation. After a particularly nasty row, Ben's mum went to talk to him in his room. He began to scream and cry that no one cared about him and picked up a shoe and flung it at the bedroom window, which smashed. He was very frightened by this and so was his mum. She enlisted the help of his sister to talk to him. Ben eventually told his sister that he was being bullied in the playground at school by a group of boys. The bullying was verbal, continual name-calling and taunting. Ben felt that no one cared about him and had started to believe the 'names' might be true.

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Resource sheet 3

Case study analysis: part 1

	Thoughts and feelings	Useful skills
The facts	What is going on?	• Attending • Listening
Thoughts	What do you think are the responsibilities of a parent/carer?	• Questioning
Feelings	What feelings might you have? How could they influence your judgement?	• Empathy

Case study analysis: part 2

Prompts	Thoughts and feelings	Useful skills
Learning points	It's OK to be angry	• Understanding
	Ask for/offer support	•
	Plan a way forward	•

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Resource sheet 4

Sample guidance for parents and carers that could be sent out with details of the school's anti-bullying policy

This guidance may help you think about how you might support your child in relation to bullying in school.

One of the responsibilities you have as a parent/carer is to ensure that your child understands that **nothing is so awful that they cannot talk about it with someone they trust**. Although you may feel hurt if you are not the first port of call, the important thing is that your child talks to someone.

You will need to explain the following to your child:

Nothing ...

This is an absolute. There are no exceptions.

... is so awful ...

What does awful mean? What are awful situations? – hurtful, embarrassing, etc.

... that we can't ...

The message must be that they mustn't keep worries locked inside and can talk about anything to the person of their choice.

... talk with someone about it.

This is about exchanging views and concerns. You should make sure your child understands that this is about empowering them to do something about their situation with support if that is what they want.

It is important to explain to your child that they need a network of people they can talk to. Try to establish with your child four or more people who could form part of their network.

Think about the following.

- Who else do you think your child might turn to?
- How would you feel about this?
- What conversations would you have with others to ensure your child was protected and supported in relation to incidents of bullying?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of support mechanism?
- Would you want or need to discuss this with the school?

The *Protective Behaviours* manual (2002) is obtainable from:
www.protectivebehaviours.co.uk

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4 Bullying Unit 4.3PC	
Title	Raising awareness of parents/carers in understanding how bullying presents itself in school
Level	Ready for more
Audience	Parents/carers
Purpose	• To support parents/carers in their understanding of the ways in which bullying presents itself in school life • To ensure that parents/carers are fully aware of the systems and strategies that are used in school to reduce and prevent bullying
Possible use	The materials can be used to: • promote greater understanding of the causes of bullying; • help parents/carers to become aware of the strong feelings evoked by bullying.
Impact can be measured by	• increased parent/carer knowledge of the causes and effects of bullying as shown when interviewed; • increased parental confidence that the school is working to create a safe climate inside and outside the classroom, as shown in surveys of parents'/carers' perceptions (e.g. parent evenings); • improved cooperation between parents/carers and the school in dealing with incidents of bullying, shown through written feedback after resolution of incidents.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Leadership and management Pupil support systems Links with partners and other agencies
Links to other material in this section	Staff: Ready for more 4.3S Promoting a climate in and out of class where bullying cannot thrive
Reference to other resources	*Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 2003) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools* (DfES 0064/2000) *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying www.kidscape.org.uk www.antibullying.net/parents.htm

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Raising awareness of parents/carers in understanding how bullying presents itself in school

Introduction

Bullying affects everyone in a child's life, including their family. This can lead to stress at home, particularly when parents/carers do not know how to handle this sensitive situation. This is where schools can help: they can provide important advice and support to help parents/carers deal with their feelings of anger and despair. Parents/carers will then be able to support their children more effectively and, over time, support the school's efforts to reduce and prevent bullying overall.

Raising awareness through a workshop approach

One way of raising the awareness of parents/carers and helping them to understand how bullying presents itself in school is through a carefully structured workshop or series of workshops. If schools are planning a series of workshops, they should consider the sequence and explain to parents and carers the overall purpose of the programme of sessions. This should help in maintaining enthusiasm and attendance at each session.

Planning the workshop

The workshop approach is most successful when underpinned by clear planning. Issues to consider include the following.

- The workshop will be most successful if it is first targeted at one year group. Small numbers will help to make parents/carers feel relaxed and more able to contribute to discussion.
- In order to attract the appropriate audience, it will be important to advertise the workshop sensitively. Support staff, such as teaching assistants and parent governors, could help to persuade parents/carers to attend, by word of mouth.
- Support staff, who may be well known and trusted in the local community, can make an important contribution to an event like this.

During the workshop

Explore with parents/carers why it is sometimes hard to know that bullying is taking place.

- Pupils who are bullied or who are bullying often find it hard to talk to anyone about it.
- Pupils may be too afraid to tell in case they too are targeted.
- In the busy lives of both staff and parents/carers, deteriorating behaviour can go unnoticed and then be dealt with as the problem rather than a symptom of other difficulties.
- There are a range of staff in the school who can be involved in tackling bullying and whom parents/carers can approach for support, including support staff and teaching assistants. A whole range of staff are likely to have a role or responsibility in the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy.

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Suggested content

The following activity could form the basis of the workshop.

Activity 1

First, ask parents/carers to think about and discuss how bullying might present itself in school. When facilitating the workshop, make sure that the different types of bullying, and their effects, are covered and discussed. For example, three main types of bullying are:

- physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobile phones.

It is also important to ensure that parents/carers are given the opportunity to discuss racist and sexual bullying and bullying about some form of disability. This will entail using a sensitive approach to ensure that parents/carers are not made to feel uncomfortable.

Ask parents/carers, in pairs, to consider the first part of Pravin's story on **Resource sheet 1**. Then, using the prompts on **Resource sheet 2**, establish the key points of the case study, what the causes of the difficulties might be and the actions that are needed to resolve the situation.

Allow 5 to 10 minutes for groups to share their thoughts before moving on to the second part of Pravin's story on **Resource sheet 3**. Explain what happens next. Identify any good ideas.

Next, use **Resource sheet 4** to move the discussion from **understanding the cause and effect of bullying** to considering **what steps the parents/carers might take next** and **how they might work with the school**. These considerations might include:

- what resources are available?
- what happens elsewhere?
- who 'owns' these actions?

It is worth considering how to approach the resource sheets with parents/carers who may have difficulty with, or lack confidence in, reading.

In summarising this activity, you will want to:

- reassure parents/carers that families and the school can work together to create an environment where bullying is neither accepted nor tolerated;
- highlight that if parents/carers have confidence in the school's capacity to intervene, they are in a stronger position to support their own child effectively;
- restate the school's commitment to providing a place where all pupils are valued for who they are;
- emphasise the need for pupils to feel safe and secure so that they can benefit from teaching and learning;
- emphasise that cooperation and partnership between school and parents/carers is the first step to resolving issues.

Finally, use **Resource sheet 5** to discuss with parents and carers what could be done to prevent similar incidents. Focus on the measures that would make the most immediate impact and those which would take longer to embed across school.

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Useful prompts might include the following.

- What will make the greatest difference?
- What is currently manageable?
- How can parents and carers contribute to the action plan?
- How do we monitor the impact of measures put in place each term?

Summary

By the end of this unit parents/carers will:

- know the different forms bullying can take;
- understand the different causes of bullying;
- be familiar with the action schools can take to resolve bullying issues;
- be aware of the different ways that they can work with the school to address bullying issues.

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Resource sheet 1

Pravin's story – part 1

Pravin was in Year 9 and had been doing very well. He enjoyed school and took part in quite a few after-school clubs. He was also getting good grades in most of his subjects.

But then things started to change. In the spring term, Pravin began to be very bad tempered and sulky. He refused to do his homework and spent hours in his room, on his own. Often, he refused to even come out to eat his dinner. On really bad days, he wouldn't get out of bed to go to school, saying 'he didn't feel well'.

Pravin's mum and dad got very cross with him, but it made no difference. In fact, it made things worse. They also began to row about Pravin, accusing each other of being 'too soft on him'.

Towards the middle of the spring term, Pravin's head of year contacted his mum and dad to discuss his absences and lack of work. A meeting was arranged. Pravin's parents found out that his behaviour in school was as bad as at home. He was not working in any lesson and had stopped going to football club and basketball.

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Resource sheet 2

Pravin's story

Stage 1 – raising awareness of bullying

Prompts	Key points
How familiar is this kind of situation?	
What might be the cause of this behaviour?	
How does it make you feel?	
How would you like things to be different?	
What options do you have to change things?	
What will you do if the changes don't work out?	

Share conclusions with another group and write down how you might resolve the situation.

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Resource sheet 3

Pravin's story – part 2

Now Pravin's parents were really worried. They decided to have a serious talk with Pravin about school and his behaviour at home. They explained how worried and upset they were. They told him that his behaviour was making them row too. Pravin's little brother also got upset and blurted out that his mates had been teasing him about 'his stroppy, grumpy brother'.

Pravin felt bad about upsetting all of his family. In fact, he was surprised that they had been so upset. He thought he was the only one that was going through a bad time. Finally, he began to talk. He told them how a group of boys in his class had been teasing him in lessons. They called him names like 'poof' and 'queer'. They had been waiting for him in the corridors and jostling him. Once, they had even nicked all of his books and threw them down the toilet. It had got so bad that even his mates had stopped hanging around with him because they were scared of being bullied too.

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Resource sheet 4

Pravin's story

Stage 2 – reaching resolution

Prompts	Key points
What are your first thoughts?	
What are the pupil's needs?	
How would you reassure the child?	
What can you do to help?	
Who should be part of that help?	

Share ideas with another group and write down your conclusions.

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Resource sheet 5

Action plan for developing the school's approach to anti-bullying with parents and carers

Focus	What can be done soon?	What can be done next term?	What can be done next year?
Role of the parent or carer			
Raise awareness of how bullying happens			

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4 Bullying Unit 4.4PC	
Title	Enabling parents/carers to understand and work within the school anti-bullying policy
Level	Getting started
Audience	Parents and carers
Purpose	• To communicate the school's anti-bullying policy widely and effectively • To show practical ways of working with parents/carers on the school's anti-bullying polic. • To introduce strategies to support parents/carers when dealing with bullying incidents
Possible use	The materials can be used by behaviour and attendance leaders, pastoral heads of year, form tutors and parent/carer groups: • to review existing communication with parents/carers and assess impact; • at staff meetings to identify and introduce new strategies and approaches; • to develop resources to support parents and carers; • to generate ideas for new strategies in involving parents/carers.
Impact can be measured by	• an initial increase in appropriate referrals and reporting of bullying by parents/carers; • staff reporting an increase in their reminders to parents/carers of the school's anti-bullying policy; • the school using a range of strategies and resources to develop understanding and collaboration with parents and carers, evidenced by school policy and procedures; • a reduction in the number of cases of parents/carers expressing dissatisfaction with the way the school handles reported incidents.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Everyday policies Links with partners and other agencies
Links to other material in this section	Parents/carers: getting started 4.1PC Including parents/carers in reviewing and developing an anti-bullying policy
Reference to other resources	*Behaviour and attendance training materials: Core day 1* and *Core day 2* (DfES 0055-2004) *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools* (DfES 0064/2000) *Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 2003) *Solutions in Schools:* Chapter 6 – Solution Focused Anti-bullying (BT Press 2001) www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying www.kidscape.org.uk www.antibullying.net/parents.htm

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Enabling parents/carers to understand and work within the school anti-bullying policy

Introduction

An effective anti-bullying policy is the responsibility of the whole school. Ofsted notes that a feature of good practice is:

> *... a clear policy statement about bullying which has input from staff, governors, parents and pupils and which includes examples of how instances of bullying will be handled.*
> *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003)

The best anti-bullying policies make it clear that parents and carers need to understand what is meant by bullying and how to report incidents. They also need to understand what the law says about bullying. Effective liaison with parents and carers helps to increase the chances of finding acceptable solutions to incidents.

Sharing the anti-bullying policy with parents/carers

Schools recognise that at the time a parent or carer reports an incident to the school they are frequently upset or angry. Research from Kingston upon Hull (*Solutions in Schools*, Young, 1998) suggests that many parents/carers approach schools expecting an unsatisfactory outcome to their concern; therefore, establishing a shared view of the problem is often difficult. Differences of view are due in part to a lack of understanding from parents and carers about the school's policy and procedures.

What makes an effective policy?

Good practice in ensuring parental understanding of the school's anti-bullying policy is seen in schools where parents/carers:

- can see the rationale behind the policy;
- understand how the policy works in practice;
- feel involved in the development and review of the policy and procedures;
- know where to get a copy of the policy.

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Activity 1

Consider how the school includes, informs and involves parents/carers in understanding and contributing to the principles behind the anti-bullying policy. Finding answers to the following questions, and informing the school and parents/carers of these answers, might be useful.

- Are parents/carers satisfied with the extent of their involvement?
- Do parents/carers understand the policy and where its principles came from?
- How does the school monitor this?
- Does the involvement extend to all parents/carers? (How does the school approach hard-to-reach parents/carers?)

The answers to these questions could be found by examining the anti-bullying policy, interviewing school staff and surveying parents/carers. Compare the answers against the features of an effective policy and then start to identify what actions might need to be taken to raise awareness and increase involvement.

Look at the case study on **Resource sheet 1**. Consider how the school could have dealt with this situation differently in order to avoid the problem of communication. In particular, think with parents/carers about the context of racist bullying and what actions could have been taken to reassure Zaheer's parents that the school understood the seriousness and implications of the incident.

> *Racist bullying is therefore likely to hurt … pupils from the same group and their families.* (*Bullying: don't suffer in silence* (DfES 0064/2002)

Consider the following questions as a way of reviewing your current practice.

- How are parents and carers made aware of the anti-bullying policy?
- How is the policy made available and accessible to all parents/carers? For example, as a leaflet? On the school website? In community languages?
- How does the school ensure that parents and carers understand terms like 'peer support' and 'restorative justice'
- How can pupils be encouraged to focus on bullying bahviour rather than identifying individuals as 'bullies'?

Helpful advice and guidance for schools on involving parents and carers is set out in the DfES publication, *Bullying: don't suffer in silence* (pages 36–38). Drawing on good practice, this document details some of the useful approaches schools can use. These include:

- regular consultation and communication;
- providing information about the nature and effects of bullying;
- practical advice, for example, advising parents/carers of the possible consequences of their children bringing valuable items to school;
- putting on a drama to which parents/carers are invited.

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Exploring ways that schools can develop their approaches to informing parents/carers so they understand how policy relates to practice and how they can be involved in further refining policy

Activity 2

Use **Resource sheet 2** to consider the approaches recommended in *Bullying: don't suffer in silence*, and other ways in which the school can increase the confidence of parents and carers in its anti-bullying policy by including them in its development and making sure advice is always accessible.

The comments in the speech bubbles on the resource sheet exemplify some common complaints from parents and carers regarding schools' anti-bullying policies.

These comments can be used, perhaps cut up on cards, to stimulate discussion in a staff or parents' meeting on strategies that could be used to improve communication with parents/carers to develop their understanding of the policy. They could also be used to stimulate discussions about the rationale behind the policy.

Activity 3

Resource sheet 3 sets out strategies you could use to ensure parents/carers are kept well informed and supported in relation to the anti-bullying policy and includes some examples of how the school would know if the strategy is effective and the next steps to take. Use the resource sheet with colleagues to review your current approach and identify additional actions you can take. It might also be useful to ask colleagues how parents/carers could be involved in developing and reviewing these strategies.

Resource sheet 4 is a sample letter and **Resource sheet 5** an example of a poster that may be used to promote the policy to parents/carers.

Use **Resource sheet 6** to outline how new strategies will be introduced. Try to target actions which will have the biggest impact initially.

Summary

By the end of this unit parents/carers will:

- understand what is meant by bullying;
- understand how the school policy works in practice;
- know how to report incidents of bullying;
- know how they can get involved in developing the school anti-bullying policy.

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Resource sheet 1

A case study

Zaheer had been complaining to his form teacher that some boys in Year 9 were following and taunting him. He felt this was because they saw him as different and too afraid to fight or answer back. He had become very afraid of going to lunch and more pupils had started to whisper taunts. The form tutor had been concerned about Zaheer and reported the incident to the head of year. He had contacted Zaheer's parents to tell them that the situation was being dealt with. Zaheer's parents were relieved as he appeared to regain confidence and to stop worrying about lunchtimes.

They asked Zaheer what had changed. He told his parents that the boys were being encouraged to get to know him and that this had made him feel better and they were now supporting him whenever other pupils began to make racist comments. He then told them that this was part of the school's peer-mediation initiative.

Zaheer's parents were very angry and contacted the school to find out why the pupils responsible for the bullying hadn't been punished. The school explained that they operated a system of peer support and mediation. The headteacher explained that the policy sought to change the behaviour of those who bullied as well as support those who had been bullied. Zaheer's parents found this hard to accept, feeling that the school was supporting these people more than it was supporting their son. From their experiences at school, they believed that these pupils should be given detentions or excluded. They felt a soft option had been taken and complained that the school didn't give a clear message that bullying, and racism, is unacceptable. They were not aware of the anti-bullying policy and weren't sure when or if they had been given a copy.

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Resource sheet 2

There's no point in contacting the school – they don't do anything. They may have a policy but it didn't help me.

Kids should toughen up. I was bullied and it made me tougher. Teach them to fight back.

I only had any joy when I got in touch with the LEA. They explained the school has to do something – it's the law.

I think I had the policy when she started school but I can't remember what it is.

I don't agree with the policy. They should be punished.

The policy doesn't say anything about how to deal with your own child when you think they're bullying.

The policy suggested that staff would react to bullying. They don't notice it half the time.

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Resource sheet 3

Review of strategies to inform and support parents/carers with their understanding of the anti-bullying policy

Section A: Existing strategies

Description of strategy	Is this an effective strategy? How do you know?	Next steps • Maintaining momentum – how? • Revitalising strategy – how? • Terminating strategy
Newsletters and leaflets to describe a new policy or development in policy.	Parents/carers return questionnaire or contact school to ask questions. Parents/carers are more aware of policy when they speak with staff. Pupils bring fewer valuable items to school.	Change format and timing of newsletter. Do 'spot check' when meeting with parents/carers to establish understanding.
Sample letter home with details of procedures to aid process (see example on Resource sheet 4).	Parents/carers use sample letter and report increased confidence. Staff report fewer incidents of angry or upset parents/carers.	Consult parent governors about ways to disseminate this information and alternative approaches.
Ask all staff to highlight the anti-bullying policy at parent/carer or induction evening meetings to reinforce the message and make copies available.	Parents/carers discuss the policy with confidence or ask questions.	At subsequent meetings, put posters up to remind parents/carers about the school's policy and make copies available.
Include a section on the report which gives key messages about the school's anti-bullying policy. Ask for response.	Comments on return slip include reference to information. Incidents are reported in line with suggested procedures.	Judge whether response was sufficient to inform future review. Consider other ways of highlighting key messages.
Dusplay posters at local council offices,shops, Citizens Advice Bureaux giving key messages about policy (see example on Resource sheet 5).	Reduced number of complaints received. Parents/carers report increased confidence in school and in their expectations of outcomes.	Try using fliers in same locations or vary posters.
School organises concert or drama using advice from LEA anti-bullying coordinator to promote policy.	Parents/carers attend concert or play and feed back increased understanding of issues.	Consider alternative approaches using external agencies. Ask them for strategies that they have found effective elsewhere.
Pupils design business cards with contact name of relevant person and number at school for further information on policy.	Incidents are reported through named person (probably form tutor in first instance).	Remind pupils regularly that cards are available and run competitions to design different cards.
Anti-bullying stand is set up at all open evenings.	Stand is visited by parents/carers and information requested.	Place stand near refreshments centre or entrance to school.
Include anti-bullying information on school website.	Website is visited and comments/ questions are received.	Update site regularly and reply to e-mails as quickly as possible.

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Resource sheet 4

Sample letter 1

This is a sample letter that you could share with parents/carers through the school prospectus, parents' evenings, at review meetings or transition meetings. Have copies available in school and give to pupils if requested. You could attach a brief note explaining that this is to reassure parents/carers that you want to hear their concerns and to discuss the resolution within the framework of the school's anti-bullying policy.

Dear headteacher/form tutor

I believe my son/daughter (name) is being bullied. The incidents involve some Year ? pupils. My son/daughter has become so upset he/she no longer wants to come to school. On (dates) I have complained to (names) and the response has been (explain). I don't feel this is working and I'd like you to tell me what you have done to help my child and what you intend to do.

This is how you can contact me (details).

Yours sincerely,

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Resource sheet 5

This is an example of a poster that could be displayed around the school, at local shops, offices or health centres. It is to remind parents/carers that the school has an anti-bullying policy and to give them key advice on how to contact the school if they are concerned.

.....

High School

We'd like to remind you that we take bullying seriously!

We help those who bully and the bullied through carefully organised support groups.

We'd like to join with you to keep all children as safe and happy as possible.

If you have any concerns about bullying at the school call us or email us today:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Call or ask for a copy of our policy

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Resource sheet 6

Review of strategies to inform and support parents/carers with their understanding of the anti-bullying policy

Section B: Feasibility study on new strategies

Description of strategy	**Who will be responsible?**	**Resource implications** (include cost and time)	**What will be the expected outcome? How will this be monitored?** (include description of system, personnel and time)

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4 Bullying Unit 4.5aPC	
Title	Accessing support and advice if I think my child is bullying other pupils
Level	Developing practice
Audience	Parents/carers
Purpose	• To develop parents'/carers' understanding of the school's support structures and points of contact • To promote parents'/carers' confidence in the school's support structures and encourage their positive involvement
Possible use	The behaviour and attendance leader and pastoral staff can use this unit to: • review the use and impact of existing procedures and strategies for supporting parents/carers; • plan new strategies and consider how they are going to be implemented; • establish clear lines of contact with parents/carers and encourage positive involvement.
Impact can be measured by	• increased levels of involvement of parents and carers whose children are bullying other pupils; • parents and carers responding positively and constructively in support meetings; • a reduction in the number of pupils who persist in bullying other pupils.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Pupil support systems
Links to other material in this section	Parents/Carers: Developing practice 4.5bPC Accessing support and advice if I think my child is being bullied by other pupils 4.5cPC Helping my child if they have witnessed other pupils being bullied
Reference to other resources	*Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) *Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 2003) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools* (DfES 0064/2000) www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying www.kidscape.org.uk www.parentlineplus.org.uk www.childline.org.uk/Resources.asp *Behaviour and attendance training materials: Core day 2* – Solution focused session (DfES 0055-2004)

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Accessing support and advice if I think my child is bullying other pupils

Introduction

It is important that parents/carers feel informed and supported by the school anti-bullying policy. Clear lines of communication enable them to express concerns and access support effectively.

All forms of bullying create great anxiety among parents/carers, especially where it involves their own children. Parents/carers' involvement and support is essential to the success of anti-bullying initiatives in schools.

Schools where staff are skilled and sensitive to the feelings of parents and carers are most successful in gaining the support of parents/carers when their child is suspected of bullying. Having a 'first contact' member of staff with whom parents/carers are familiar and who has the interpersonal and communication skills necessary can make it easier for parents/carers to approach the school when they have concerns.

Activity 1
Providing information for parents/carers

Reflect briefly on the procedures and structures you currently have in place that provide information to parents/carers about the anti-bullying policy.

For example:

- parent/carer handbook;
- parents' evenings;
- guidance leaflets;
- home–school agreements;
- induction meetings;
- community publicity;
- parent–Governor newsletter.

Consider how these procedures and structures provide **specific information** for the parents and carers of pupils who may be bullying other pupils.

Activity 2
First point of contact

It is useful to identify key members of the staff team who will be the first point of contact for concerned parents and carers. Consider the roles and responsibilities of these members of staff and identify the systems and structures that will support them in this important role. You could consult with parents/carers to find out if the first point of contact is working well. Often a high number of contacts from parents/carers indicates the success of a system and the relationships involved rather than a serious problem.

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Activity 3

School strategies for supporting parents and carers

Resource sheet 1 describes a range of strategies that are used by schools to ensure that parents/carers have support and advice if they think their child is bullying other pupils.
You might want to use this table with a mixed group of staff and parents/carers to highlight strategies that operate in your school, to evaluate their effectiveness and identify any possibilities for the future. Identify the category they fall into in relation to whether they are:
A: well established
B: to be introduced
C: not to be considered at the present time

Focusing on the strengths of your current resources will help to ensure the effectiveness of future plans.

You might want to consider:

- staff skills and expertise;
- access to private quiet spaces;
- deployment of staff, timetabling flexibility;
- inviting a mixed group of staff and parents/carers to develop the guidance on what to do if a child bullies others.

Communication with parents and carers

A large rural school in the South West often had difficulties communicating with parents because of the location of the school. The senior leadership team was keen to establish an effective system that enabled the school and parents/carers to identify issues and the actions that would be taken by both parties. They based their communication on a 'contact sheet' which goes to and from school, supported by telephone conversations and essential meetings. **Resource sheet 2** is an example of such a communication or contact sheet.

Activity 4

Using **Resource sheet 2** as a guide, work with a focus group of parents/carers to consider how useful this strategy might be in your school.

Consider the following.

- Would this meet your needs ?
- What additional information might you like to include?
- How would you modify it?
- How might it be disseminated?

Resource sheet 3 is a sample information leaflet for parents. Consider how this could be used in conjunction with the information on Resource sheet 2 to communicate to parents/carers the support and advice they can expect from school. Consider the opportunities offered by the procedures and structures discussed during Activity 1.

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Summary

By the end of this unit parents/carers will:

- know about the school's support structures and who the key points of contact are;
- have had an opportunity to advise on the development of the school's policy.

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Strategies to inform, advise and support parents who think their child is bullying other children

	A	B	C
Anti-bullying policy includes clear lines of communication for parents/carers. For example, 'Any parents concerned about their child bullying others should contact the form tutor in the first instance. All calls will be responded to within 24 hours'.			
Anti-bullying policy contains guidance for parents on why children bully others. For example: • they don't know it's wrong; • they are copying others within the family or outside; • they have difficulty in making friends and mixing with others; • their friends encourage them to bully; • they are going through difficult times and are acting out aggressive feelings.			
Information for parents is available and accessible. For example: • the anti-bullying policy is available in the school office and on the school's website; • a list of resources and organisations that can help is published in a guidance leaflet.			
Anti-bullying policy contains guidance for parents/carers on what to do if their child bullies others. For example: • talk to your child, explaining how bullying affects others; • discourage other members of your family from bullying or from using aggression to get what they want; • make an appointment to see a member of staff to discuss your concerns; • check regularly with your child how things are going at school and give your child praise and encouragement when they are successful.			
All first-contact staff know the school procedures and respond effectively. For example, they: • use a solution-focused approach; • have clear knowledge and understanding of the anti-bullying policy; • understand that the parent/carer may be upset or angry; • keep an open mind; • remain calm and understanding; • make it clear that the school cares and will respond to all concerns; • explain the school's procedures; • record parents'/carers' concerns and any details of incidents; • have read DfES guidance in *Bullying: don't suffer in silence*.			

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Resource sheet 1 page 2 of 2

	A	B	C
A member of staff is responsible for collecting and collating parent/carer concerns and contact details. Data is used to examine trends and plan a school response.			
Individual and group support is available in school for all children who bully. For example: • skills-based groups; • restorative justice; • mentoring; • counselling; • peer support.			
Anti-bullying is discussed at parents' meetings.			
The school provides a guidance leaflet for parents/carers that is made easily accessible. For example, it is: • available from the school office; • included in parent handbooks; • available on the school's website.			
All first-contact staff have training in responding to parents/carers.			
There is clear guidance for parents/carers and staff on conducting meetings and the support that can be offered.			
For example, a form giving a possible meeting structure is available to parents/carers.			
The parent governor has knowledge of the school's anti-bullying policy and the procedures involved.			
Individual and group support is available in school for parents/carers of children who bully. For example: • through providing, or joining with other schools to provide, a parent/carer support group; • a member of staff is designated to support parents/carers; • information on provision of support by the LEA or other services is provided.			

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Resource sheet 2

An example of a communication or contact sheet for parents who think their child is bullying other pupils

My concern is:
Other parents have complained to me about my child Harry bullying others.

Telling school of concerns
First point of contact is: Form tutor – Mr Caring
School office telephone no.: 0423 6635
E-mail: Mr Caring@concernedschool.co.uk
Contacted school
Date: 16 June **Time:** 12:00

School's reply
Date: 17 June **Time:** 11:00
Mr Caring has arranged to meet me at the school at 3:45 on 19 June. He will send the school's guidance leaflet on what to do if you think your child might be bullying others. I can read the school's anti-bullying policy on the school's website or get a copy from the school office.

First meeting with school
Questions I want to ask:
Is Harry bullying in school?
How long has it been going on?
What exactly is he doing?
Is his bullying affecting his friendships with others? What have school done about the situation so far?
What else can I do at home to help?
What will happen next?

Meeting at school
Date: 19 June Time: 3:45
People present

School staff	**Parents**
Mr Caring (form tutor)	*Mrs Harris*
	Mrs Knowles (my friend)

What I will do now
Spend time with Harry and make sure I listen to him.
Invite him to bring James home, as he is a good influence.
Try to give him extra attention and praise when he is polite and helpful.

What school will do now
Mr Caring will talk to Harry. They will work together to find solutions to the problem.
School will monitor Harry and inform me of any incidents of bullying.
Harry will be provided with a peer mentor to support him.

Next meeting
Date: 23 June **Time:** 4:00 **With:** Mr Caring

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Resource sheet 3

Sample leaflet for parents

Supportive High School

Advice and guidance for parents who think their child is bullying others

Don't keep it to yourself

We are here to help you

We will look for solutions

Contact your child's form tutor. They will get back to you within 24 hours.

The school office can take your call, you don't need to give any details – just tell them it's about bullying.

School office telephone no:

Have you read the school's anti-bullying policy? It offers help and guidance.

Copies are available from the school office and on-line at www.supportivehigh.co.uk

Other organisations that can help:

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

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4 Bullying Unit 4.5bPC	
Title	Accessing support and advice if I think my child is being bullied by other pupils
Level	Developing practice
Audience	Parents/carers
Purpose	• To develop parents'/carers' understanding of the school's support structures and points of contact • To promote parents'/carers' confidence in the school's support structures and encourage their positive involvement
Possible use	The behaviour and attendance leader and pastoral staff can use this unit to work with parents in: • reviewing and evaluating existing systems that provide support and advice for parents; • planning new approaches to contacting and involving parents.
Impact can be measured by	• surveys of parents/carers showing that they have a clear understanding of first contact points and their own role in helping their child; • when reviewed, staff reporting that parents respond positively during support meetings.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Pupil support systems
Links to other material in this section	Parents/Carers: Developing practice 4.2PC Developing the parent/carer role in helping to reduce bullying in school
Reference to other resources	*Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools* (DfES 0064/2000) *Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 2003) www.dfes.gov.uk/ibis www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying www.kidscape.org.uk www.parentcentre.gov.uk www.antibullying.net/parents.htm

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Accessing support and advice if I think my child is being bullied by other pupils

Introduction

The following extract outlines the importance of engaging parents and carers in anti-bullying programmes and the need to provide them with a clear route of accessing support and advice if they discover their child is being bullied.

> *Parental support is often a key to success or failure in anti-bullying initiatives. Even though not always apparent, parental approval is very important to children and young people of all ages, and some schools have learned to build on this. The majority of parents support anti-bullying measures and are keen to participate. Consultation is important, helping create an ethos in which positive behaviour is encouraged, and bullying considered unacceptable.*
>
> *However, a significant few do hold unhelpful attitudes, saying bullying is an inevitable (even desirable) part of growing up and encouraging bullied children to 'stand up for themselves' rather than seek help. While understandable, this contradicts the aim of most anti-bullying initiatives, to encourage children to tell staff about bullying rather than try to fight back.*
>
> www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying

Schools know that any action to support parents/carers of pupils being bullied operates within a highly emotional context. This unit offers ways in which they can develop support structures with parents/carers, so there is greater likelihood of parents/carers understanding and contributing to effective anti-bullying practice. In adopting these activities, schools will want to consider how these measures will improve the understanding and engagement of the 'significant few'.

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Considering the existing support structures available to parents/carers

Activity 1

This activity could be used with a combination of staff and parents/carers, as part of a working or focus group.

Consider the support structures you currently have in place to provide information to parents/carers. Consider also your anti-bullying policy and how it supports them if their child is being bullied. Decide which measures are essential and which are desirable within your school's context.

The following are some examples that could be used as prompts.

Essential

- Parents' handbook outlining the school staff who can help immediately if parents/carers discover their child is being bullied.
- Home–school agreements setting out how the school and parents/carers can work in partnership.
- Anti-bullying posters in local community centres.
- Members of staff trained in supporting parents/carers of children being bullied.

Desirable

- Parents' evenings where there is opportunity (and the right physical environment) for parents/carers to discuss any fears they may have that their child is being bullied.
- Induction meetings, where there is opportunity for parents/carers to discuss the support structures available.
- Short guidance leaflets about first-contact arrangements for parents concerned that their child is being bullied.
- Engagement of community leaders in anti-bullying initiatives.

Consider in more detail how current structures offer support for all parents/carers, ranging from those already actively involved in other areas of school life through to those who have little or no contact with the school. You could draw up a continuum or scale that identifies what support is currently available and who is currently accessing it.

The group could then discuss the following.

- What more could be done to improve and advertise the support across this continuum of parental engagement?
- Across the continuum, who would be the most appropriate staff contact for parents/carers?
- Do these staff members have the skills to support parents/carers in specific cases where their child is being bullied?
- How can the skills of these staff members be developed (and maintained) further through training and support?

At the end of this activity, the group could identify a list of priorities for ensuring all parents/carers are aware of the support available. It is likely that one of these priorities will be ensuring all parents/carers know who the first point of contact is. The following activities explore this area and other strategies schools could deploy to reinforce and develop access to support structures.

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First contact

Parents/carers who request support and advice because they suspect their child is being bullied not only require information but will also require the skills and support of staff they can approach easily. Having a 'first contact' member of staff, with whom parents/carers are familiar and when they trust, can make it easier for parents/carers to approach the school when they are concerned about their child.

Activity 2

Identify the key members of staff who will be the first point of contact for concerned parents and carers.

Form tutors and heads of year are likely to be included in the list. Who else may be approached? In other cases, a teaching assistant or member of staff who provides additional support to specific pupils may be the person whom the parent/carer know best and so may be identified in this initial contact list. It is important, therefore, that the contact list includes all those who could offer support.

Consider the roles and responsibilities of these members of staff and identify the systems and structures that support them in this important role.

Once the first contacts are agreed, decide how best to communicate this information to parents/carers considering the priorities outlined after Activity 1.

Following this activity, consider the whole communication process for cases of bullying. Reflect on the barriers to an effective process. For example, a large rural school in the South West often experienced difficulties communicating with parents/carers due to the location of the school. The senior leadership team was keen to establish an effective system that enabled parents/carers to communicate with the school if they suspected that their child was being bullied. It wanted to be transparent about the actions being taken by the school and the role they expected the parent/carer to take. They based their communication on a 'contact sheet', which goes to and from school, supported by telephone conversations and essential meetings.

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Activity 3

Look at **Resource sheet 1**, a sample communication or contact sheet.

- Would it meet the needs of your school?
- What additional information might you like to include?
- What would you change?
- What could be done to ensure such communications are received and understood by hard-to-reach parents/carers?

Think about how such a communication or contact sheet might be disseminated. For example, would there be several blank copies in the parent handbook?

Resource sheet 2 is a sample information leaflet for parents/carers.

- How could this be developed and changed to ensure a professional and informative leaflet was produced that could be sent to parents/carers?
- How could this be used in conjunction with the communication or contact sheet to establish the rights and responsibilities of parents or carers who think their child is being bullied?
- What could be done to ensure such information is communicated to hard-to-reach parents/carers?
- How could this be used with parents/carers to help develop good practice in supporting children who are bullied?

Identifying school strategies

Following the above activities, return to the whole-school priorities of improving parental/carer access to support structures and determine which strategies should be pursued further.

Activity 4

Resource sheet 3 provides a range of strategies that are used by schools to ensure that parents/carers have support and advice if they think their child is being bullied by other pupils. Use the table to highlight the strategies that you have in your school. Identify the category they fall into in relation to whether they are:

- A – well established;
- B – to be introduced;
- C – not to be considered at the present time.

Reflect on the judgements you have made about each of the strategies and how they match the priorities identified. Focus on what is working well and note the strengths of the current resource. Identify how those strengths can be used to support new strategies. For example, the strengths may be staff skills or training on anger management.

Prioritise the next steps by focusing on what provision you would like to see in place within the next term. Identify long-term aims to consider when current practice has been embedded and all staff are confident in their work with parents/carers.

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Summary

By the end of this unit parents/carers will:

- know where to go for support and advice if they think their child is being bullied;
- know that their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon constuctively;
- understand the mechanism for reporting and responding to incidents of bullying and their role in that process.

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Resource sheet 1

An example of a communication or contact sheet for parents who think their child is being bullied by other pupils

My concern is:
My daughter, Sam, has told me that two girls have been bullying her at lunchtime. Last week they demanded money and this week on Tuesday she was repeatedly called a 'tart' by both girls.

Telling school of concerns
First point of contact is: Form tutor – Mr Caring
School office telephone no.: 0423 6635
E-mail: Mr Caring@concernedschool.co.uk
Contacted school
Date: 16 June **Time:** 12:00

School's reply
Date: 17 June **Time:** 3:45
Mr Caring has arranged to meet me at the school at 3:45 on 19 June. He will send the school's guidance leaflet on how to help your child if they are being bullied. I can read the school's anti-bullying policy on the school's website or get a copy from the school office.

First meeting with school
Questions I want to ask:
Does the school know Sam is being bullied?
What will the school do about the girls who are bullying Sam?
What will the school do to help Sam?
What can I do to help at home?

Meeting at school
Date: 19 June **Time:** 3:45
People present

School staff	**Parents**
Mr Caring (form tutor)	Mrs Harris
	Mrs Knowles (my friend)

What I will do now
Make time to talk to Sam and listen to her.
Remind her that she must tell Mr Caring if the bullying happens again.
Contact Mr Caring if I have any more concerns.

What school will do now
Mr Caring will talk to Sam and listen to her concerns. They will discuss how to help Sam feel safe in school. The two girls concerned will be talked to and monitored over the next two weeks. All lunchtime supervisors will be told of the bullying and asked to keep an eye on Sam at lunchtimes.

Next meeting
Date: 23 June **Time:** 4:00 **With:** Mr Caring

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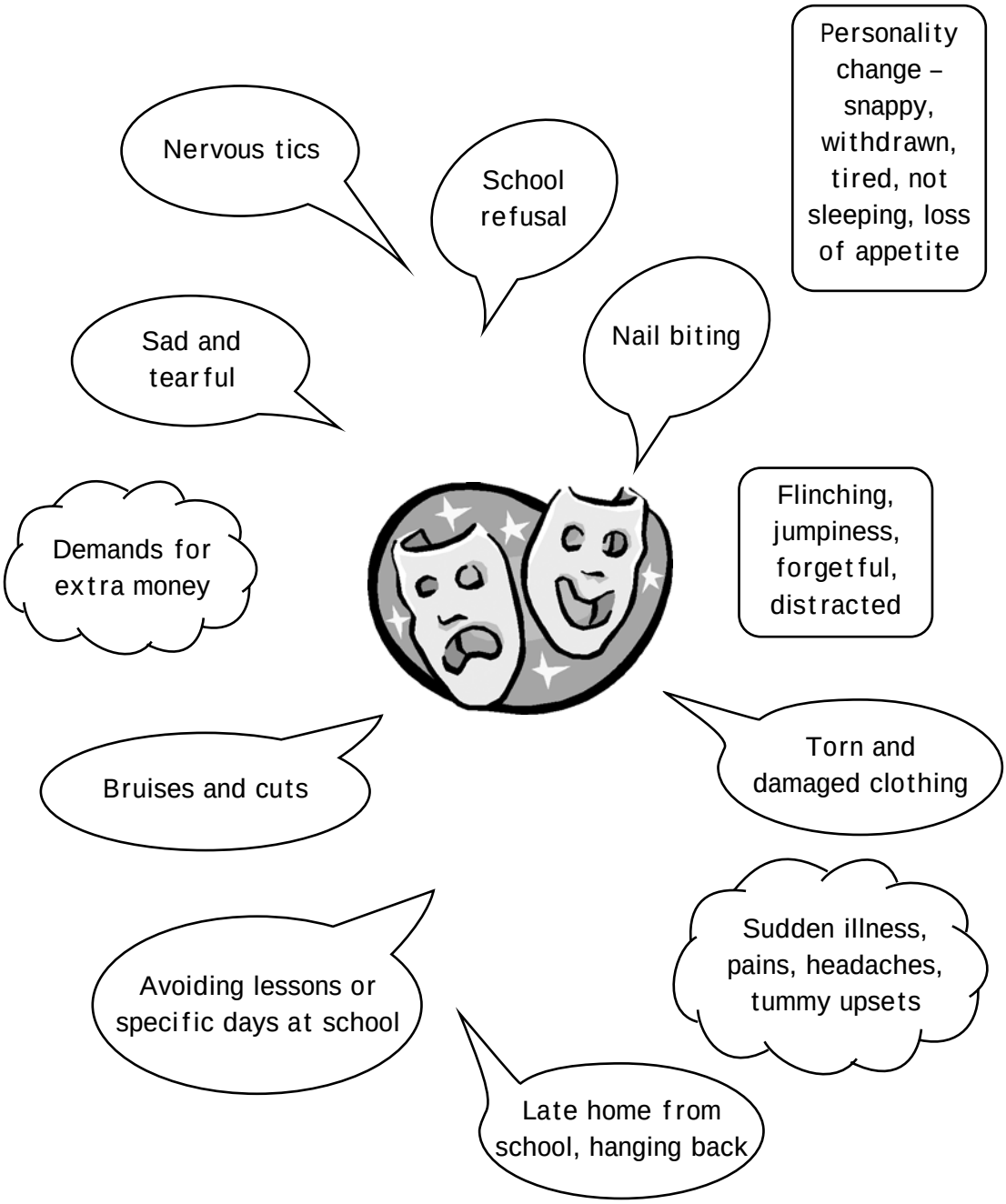
Resource sheet 2

Sample information leaflet for parents

How might I know that my child is being bullied?



These may be some signs of bullying.

If in doubt contact your child's form teacher.

We know that you care for your child – let us help.

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Strategies to inform, advise and support parents who think their child is being bullied by other children

	A	B	C
Essential strategies			
Anti-bullying policy includes clear lines of communication for parents/carers. For example, 'Any parents concerned about their child being bullied should contact the form tutor in the first instance. All calls will be responded to within 24 hours'.			
Anti-bullying policy contains guidance for parents/carers on the signs of bullying. For example: • lack of confidence, withdrawal from social activities; • personality change – snappy, withdrawn, tired, weepy, loss of appetite; • school refusal; • avoidance of specific lessons or days; • torn and damaged clothing and belongings.			
Definition of bullying displayed and explained to parents.			
Information for parents/carers is available and accessible. For example: • anti-bullying policy is available in the school office and on the school's website; • list of resources and organisations that can help is published in a guidance leaflet.			
Anti-bullying policy contains guidance for parents/carers on what to do if their child is being bullied. For example: • make an appointment to see a member of staff; • explain the problems your child is experiencing; • calmly talk to your child about it; • make a note of what your child says – who was involved, how often it occurred, where it happened and what has happened; • reassure your child that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do; • explain that any further incidents should be reported to an adult immediately.			

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Resource sheet 3 page 2 of 3

	A	B	C
Essential strategies			
All first-contact staff know the school procedure and respond effectively. For example, they: • use a solution-focused approach; • have clear knowledge and understanding of the anti-bullying policy; • recognise that the parent/carer may be upset or angry; • keep an open mind; • remain calm and understanding; • make it clear that the school does care and will respond; • explain the school's procedures; • record parents'/carers' concerns and any details of incidents; • have read DfES guidance in *Bullying: don't suffer in silence*.			
A member of staff is responsible for collecting and collating parent/carer concerns and contact details. Data is used to examine trends and plan a school response.			
Individual and group support is available in school for children who are bullied. For example: • skills-based groups; • mentoring; • counselling; • peer support; • buddy systems.			
Desirable strategies			
Anti-bullying is discussed at parents'/carers' meetings.			
The school provides a guidance leaflet for parents/carers that is made easily accessible. For example, it is: • available from the school office; • included in parent handbooks; • available on the school's website.			
All first-contact staff have training in responding to parents/carers.			
All school staff have training in anti-bullying strategies, for example, lunchtime supervisors and secretarial staff.			
There is clear guidance for parents/carers and staff on conducting meetings and the support that can be offered. For example, a form giving a possible meeting structure is available to parents/carers.			

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	A	B	C
The parent governor has knowledge of the school's anti-bullying policy and the procedures involved when parents/carers raise concerns.			
Individual and group support is available in school for parents/carers of children who are bullied. For example: • through providing, or joining with other schools to provide, a parent/carer support group; • a member of staff is designated to support parents; • information on provision of support by LEA or other services is provided.			

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4 Bullying Unit 4.5cPC	
Title	Helping my child if they have witnessed other pupils being bullied
Level	Developing practice
Audience	Parents/carers
Purpose	• To provide parents/carers with information on how to support their child • To ensure that parents/carers have access to a support network
Possible uses	These materials can be used: • with parents/carers at parents' evenings, with parent governors and PTAs to explore these ideas further; • by staff to give pupils opportunities to explore the importance of sharing their concerns with parents/carers.
Impact can be measured by	• an increase in the number of contacts between staff and parents/carers; • an increase in the number of parents and carers accessing relevant support.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Attendance Leadership and management
Links to other material in this section	Staff: Developing practice 4.5cS Encouraging pupils who witness bullying to respond in line with the school anti-bullying policy and the anti-bullying charter Pupils: Developing practice 4.5Pc What can I do if I think other pupils are being bullied?
Reference to other resources	*Bullying: effective action in secondary schools* (Ofsted 2003) *Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 2003) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools* (DfES 0064/2000) www.parentcentre.gov.uk www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying www.kidscape.org.uk www.antibullying.net/parents.htm

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Helping my child if they have witnessed other pupils being bullied

Introduction

Parents/carers can often become aware that their child is worried about the bullying of another pupil because the situation is so bad that 'doing nothing' is no longer an option. Their child may have decided to 'tell' because they feel that adult support and intervention is needed or because they are worried that the person doing the bullying may turn their attention to them.

Pupils are often unaware of the important role they play in bullying incidents. Pupils need to understand that being a bystander encourages bullying behaviour and that they can help stop the bullying. This unit is designed to support parents/carers in helping their child to explore ways of helping.

Reviewing guidance

Activity 1

The first step is to consider whether your school's anti-bullying policy has clear guidance on what action parents/carers could take if they hear about a bullying incident – if the guidance is not clear, even the most confident parents/carers may be unsure of what to do.

This review should be completed by a representative group of people, for example, parent governors, parents/carers, support staff and teaching staff. This will help ensure that the policy is clear to all who need to use it.

Use **Resource sheet 1** to help you to review the policy. Reflect on each of the questions on the sheet and:

- identify current strengths in the school policy;
- note any potential weaknesses;
- decide upon some points for action.

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Developing guidance

When a child begins to share a concern about the bullying of another pupil, parents/carers look for guidance on how to respond.

How to report an incident to the school

Activity 2

Look back at the questions on **Resource sheet 1**.

Drafting answers to each of these questions could provide a framework for a parent/carer information leaflet, for example 'How to report an incident to the school'.

- **Is it clearly stated that the whole school community shares a responsibility to promote an anti-bullying culture?**

The school's anti-bullying policy is for every member of the school community and asks every member of staff, parent/carer and pupil to help in making the community a safe and pleasant place to learn. **If you have a concern, don't keep it to yourself. Share it**.

- **Is there a straightforward procedure for reporting such incidents of bullying?**

Parents and carers can contact the school at any time. During school hours please do not hesitate to telephone us (……) or call into reception. The office staff have been specially trained to help you and will make sure that your concern is dealt with quickly, sensitively and confidentially. The school also has an out-of-school-hours telephone number (……) where you can leave a message. You will receive a reply within 24 hours. Don't forget to leave a number on which you can be contacted.

Activity 3

Resource sheet 2 provides a framework to create an advice leaflet for parents. If this is something you would like to develop, use the framework to develop your own advice leaflet for parents/carers. It might also help to have custom-designed pens with the bullyline telephone number printed on to give to parents/carers with the advice leaflet.

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Activity 4
Reporting a bullying incident

Use **Resource sheet 3** with a group of parents/carers, staff or pupils to develop their response when witnesses report bullying. One way to do this is to organise a short role-play in which the 'child' talks about the incident and the 'parent/carer' responds. Alternatively, you could use it as a starting point for discussion or develop a photo story to illustrate how parents/carers could respond to this scenario. It is also possible that the scenario presented would not be appropriate or relevant to all parent/carer groups in its current form. It will therefore need adjusting in some cases to ensure that the parent/carer groups can engage with and relate to the scenario.

Use **Resource sheet 2** to prompt responses and **Resource sheet 4** to record what was said in the role-play.

If two members of staff or confident volunteers offered to act out the conversation in stages, you would be able to comment on the value of each step.

Afterwards, the audience could be asked to suggest improvements to the draft parents'/carers' advice leaflet.

An alternative would be for pupils to present the role-play at a parents' evening, with the resource sheets being handed out afterwards.

Summary

By the end of this unit parents/carers will:

- understand the school's policy on reporting incidents and the part that they can play;
- have been able to comment on the school's policy and suggest improvements;
- have helped to improve the school's communication on bullying, for example by providing advice for the design of a leaflet for parents and carers.

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Resource sheet 1

Reviewing guidance

- Does our policy clearly state that the whole school community shares a responsibility to promote an anti-bullying culture?
- Does the school's anti-bullying policy contain guidance for parents/carers on how to respond to their child's reporting of the bullying of another pupil?
- Is there a straightforward procedure for parents/carers when reporting incidents of bullying involving other children?
- Do parents/carers know whom to contact at the school?
- Is there a direct and dedicated phone number with voicemail facility?
- Are staff clear about the procedures to follow when handling reports of bullying via telephone call, letter or through personal visits?
- Does the school welcome anonymously reported information?
- Is it clear who takes responsibility for further action when the information is received? For example, lead behaviour and attendance professional, pastoral team or headteacher?
- Is there a procedure for ensuring the parent/carer is advised of the school's response to their information?

Strengths of school anti-bullying policy

Weaknesses of school anti-bullying policy

Points for action

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Resource sheet 2

Drafting a parents'/carers' advice leaflet

Supporting my child to report a bullying incident involving other children

Key elements	Points for consideration
Welcome sharing of the concern	There may be good reasons why the concern is being raised with you as a parent/carer rather than reported to a member of staff. At this stage, just accept that you are the chosen trusted adult and show you want to listen.
Let the story be told in the child's own way	The account may be a confusing tale with days, dates, names and events all mixed up. You may even lose the thread! Don't worry. Let the story come out as your child wants it to. It is tempting to interrupt and ask questions but try not to do this: let your child tell the story in their own words.
Ask questions which clarify and show understanding	Now you can ask a few questions (but not too many) to show that you were listening and want to get the facts clear in your own mind. Explain this will help you decide what to do next. It can help to make a few notes to jog your memory later on.
Paraphrase and summarise to show that facts and feelings are being noted	At appropriate moments, you can have a go at summing up what you think has been said so far. This really helps you and your child to agree the main points and share feelings about the incident.
Allow time for additional recollections and information to emerge	Give some time for your child to reflect on what has been said so far and then ask if there's anything else you need to know.
Agree to do something together	You now know about an incident which has worried your child. Your child has entrusted you with this concern and probably feels a lot better for doing so. He/she will expect you to do something to help, but it is important that you both agree to the action to be taken.
Safeguard the child's well-being	Your child could be very worried about the consequences of sharing the concern. You need to talk about keeping the information confidential. You will want to reassure your child that sharing this concern will make things better for the person being bullied and will also help those responsible for the bullying.

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Resource sheet 3

Case study: Millie

Read this account of bullying on the school bus.

Millie comes home from school later than her usual time. Her mum notices that she is quiet and looks preoccupied. After some prompting, Millie tells her Mum that there was trouble on the bus. Her mum does not find this particularly worrying as Millie has quite often told her about some of the children behaving so badly that the bus driver has had to stop the bus and tell the pupils off.

However, this time she tells of a girl who lives in the same street who has been 'got at' by Lauren. Lauren is well known on the estate as being one of a group of girls who hang around the local late-night shop, smoking and being abusive to passers-by. She has the reputation of being 'hard' and is perceived as the leader of this group. Many of her peers are afraid of her and some of the parents have warned their children to keep away from her.

Millie told her mum that Lauren regularly calls this younger pupil names and humiliates her but that this time Lauren had thrown her bag out of the bus window. Millie noticed the girl crying while Lauren and some of the other girls just laughed at her. Millie helped the girl recover the bag which had landed yards away from the bus stop but is now worried that she might become Lauren's next target. She is also worried because the driver could not see who was responsible and thinks he may mistakenly report her for misbehaving.

This is not the first time Lauren has bullied this girl. The previous week, Lauren strapped her to a bus seat with a tie. Nobody on the bus helped. Millie knows others thought it was cruel but were too scared to say anything in case Lauren did anything to them.

Millie's mum tries to calm her fears about Lauren, but privately wonders what she could do to help.

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Resource sheet 4 page 1 of 2

Recording sheet for role-play activity based on Case study: Millie

Key elements	What was said
Welcome the sharing of the concern	
Let the story be told in the child's own way	
Ask questions which clarify and show understanding	
Paraphrase and summarise to show that facts and feelings are being noted	

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Resource sheet 4 page 2 of 2

Key elements	What was said
Allow time for additional recollections and information to emerge	
Agree to do something together	
Safeguard the child's well-being	
Decide how to share this with the school	

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4 Bullying Unit 4.6PC	
Title	Accessing parent/carer bullying support groups in or out of school
Level	Ready for more
Audience	Parents/carers
Purpose	• To ensure parents/carers have access to a support network
Possible use	• The behaviour and attendance leader, the member of staff responsible for anti-bullying, a member of the senior leadership team or a parent governor can use this unit to review existing parental/carer access to support groups and develop new strategies.
Impact can be measured by	• parents and carers making greater use of the support groups available in school, locally and nationally; • new and more effective support strategies being established; • parents and carers showing greater levels of support for the school's anti-bullying policy.
Links to other action plan toolkit sections	Pupil support systems
Links to other material in this section	Parents/Carers: Developing practice 4.5bPC Accessing support and advice if I think my child is being bullied by other pupils 4.5aPC Accessing support and advice if I think my child is bullying other pupils
Reference to other resources	*Bullying: Don't suffer in silence – an anti-bullying pack for schools* (DfES 0064/2000) *Bullying – A Charter for Action* (DfES 20003) www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying www.dontsufferinsilence.com www.ace-ed.org.uk (Advisory Centre for Education) www.kidscape.org.uk www.parentlineplus.org.uk www.childline.org.uk/Resources.asp

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Accessing parent/carer bullying support groups in or out of school

Introduction

Bullying is a very emotive and upsetting issue for parents/carers, both for the parents/carers of a child who is being bullied and the parents/carers of a child who is bullying. Support is needed for both sets of parents/carers.

In a Childline survey, **12%** of secondary pupils said that they had both bullied and been bullied in the last year.

Schools provide many support strategies for both parents/carers and pupils. The recent rise in peer support groups for pupils reflects the effectiveness of the approach. However, few in-school support networks have been established for parents/carers around the issue of bullying.

Experience shows that talking with others who share the same anxieties, fears and concerns has been effective. Parents sharing their own experiences and successes on bullying issues can provide effective support.

Telephone helplines and on-line services can also be supportive for parents. The number and range of these continues to increase (an Internet search for 'bullying' provides 67,300 sites!). However, it can be difficult for parents/carers to access appropriate support. Parents/carers need guidance to obtain access to relevant websites and information providing the support they need.

Schools may want to consider:

- providing information about telephone and on-line provision available locally and nationally to support parents/carers (and how parents/carers without Internet access could access material that would help them);
- indicating what group support is available from LEAs and local service providers including the voluntary sector;
- joining with other schools to provide a parent/carer support group;
- setting up an in-school parent support group.

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Activity 1

Resource sheet 1 is a case study of a school-based telephone support service.

- How might we know that a telephone support line is necessary?
- How might it be staffed?
- Where could the service be based?
- How would we monitor confidentiality and child protection issues?
- What training issues might it involve?

Resource sheet 2 is a case study of an LEA-led programme providing support for parents and carers.

- To whom could issues of confidentiality be addressed?
- Who would organise, plan and lead the sessions?
- How might the group be staffed from within school?
- How might the LEA representative develop staff skills in school?
- How will the sharing of information help the schools support their parents/carers and pupils?

Resource sheet 3 is an example of a school's information card for parents/carers to access telephone helplines and web-based support.

You could use **Resource sheet 4a** to review existing strategies for supporting parents and carers in your school and **Resource sheet 4b** to explore the feasibility of any new strategies suggested by the 'next steps' section of Resource sheet 4a.

Summary

By the end of this unit parents/carers will:

- know about the school's existing support mechanisms;
- have had an opportunity to review approaches used by other schools;
- have been able to contribute to the further development of the school's policy.

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Resource sheet 1

Case study: Setting up a telephone support line

School: Support High School **Address: 50 City Way, London** **Contact: AM Smith** **Phone: 0207 925 7777** **Fax: 0207 925 6000** **web/e-mail: support.highschool.com**
Brief description – What did you do? Set up a telephone support line for parents/carers of children who had been bullied to talk with other parents/carers in a similar situation. This provided the opportunity for parents/carers to share experiences, worries, concerns and solutions.
Why did you do it? The need for such support was highlighted by a parent governor who had received many calls from anxious parents/carers asking for advice. They were asking if other parents were in the same position. A parent who felt well supported by the school when her child had been involved in a bullying incident, had expressed a wish to help others.
Personnel – Who was involved? Deputy headteacher with responsibility for the anti-bullying strategy in school Parent governor Mrs Y (parent)
How did you set up the support line? The idea was suggested by Mrs Y at a meeting between the deputy headteacher, parent governor and Mrs Y. Mrs Y referred to the school's anti-bullying policy for resources for parents/carers already in the school and worked with the deputy headteacher to set out procedures and guidelines for the operation of the support line. These guidelines included confidentiality protocols Mrs Y was funded to attend a listening skills course run by the Psychology Service and provided with a telephone answering machine.
What did you manage to achieve? Every parent who contacted school about a bullying issue was offered the support of Mrs Y. Mrs Y set aside specific times during the week when she could be contacted. At other times she responded to messages left on the answering machine.
How do you know you achieved your objective? All calls were monitored and recorded. Parents/carers using the service expressed how useful it was when meeting staff in school, in particular feeling able to express their worries and concerns easily and confidently. This has resulted in discussions in school to consider extending the service.

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Resource sheet 2

Case study: LEA-led programme of support for parents/carers LEA: Caring LEA

Address: 27 Park Way
Contact: AJ Jones
Phone: 0208 657006
Fax: 0208 666666
web/email: caringlea@gov.uk

Brief description – What did you do?
Established a series of 15 sessions in five high schools for the parents/carers of children who were being bullied.

Why did you do it?
The Behaviour Support team delivered an anti-bullying workshop to staff in the schools. At these workshops staff had expressed concern at the lack of support available for the parents/carers of children who were being bullied. It was suggested that a support group be established.

Who was involved?
Behaviour support team leader
Educational social worker
Healthy Schools coordinator

How did you go about it?
The personnel involved met to develop a framework for the programme, including:

- purpose of the group;
- identification of target audience;
- information and invitations to schools wishing to participate;
- selection of schools and venue;
- content of the sessions planned;
- evaluation and review.

What did you manage to achieve?
Within the six-week period, 15 sessions took place. Attendance at each meeting varied between four and eight parents/carers.

Evaluation – How do you know you achieved your objective?
Parents/carers were asked to evaluate each meeting and the response was positive. Parents/carers said that they welcomed the opportunity to share experiences and reported that they felt less isolated. They felt more confident in helping their children both at home and at school. Some said they felt the partnership with school had been strengthened.

Comments
Future planning needs to take into account parents/carers who had work/childcare commitments and could not make it to the sessions held during the school day. Other issues include maintaining a positive and productive approach within the groups, and measuring the impact on pupils' attendance, attainment and behaviour.

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Resource sheet 3

An example school information card for parents

Bullying If your child is being **bullied** or your child is **bullying** other children, let school know first. Contact your child's form tutor. We are here to help.	**We can help by phone** Advisory Centre for Education 0207 354 8321 Anti-Bullying Campaign 0207 378 1446 Kidscape 0207 730 3300 Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
Bullying If your child is being **bullied** or your child is **bullying** other children, let school know first. Contact your child's form tutor. We are here to help	**We can help on-line** Visit www.DfES.gov.uk or www.dontsufferinsilence.com for a list of updated links. Computers are available every day in school and we provide help in using them. Contact: _____

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Resource sheet 4a

Strategy review

Section A: Existing strategies

Description of strategy	**What impact is it having? How do you know?**	**Next steps**
Telephone support line		
School-based support group		
School information cards		
LEA-led support programme		

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Resource sheet 4b

Section B: Feasibility of new strategies

Description of strategy	**Who would be responsible?**	**Resource implications** (include cost and time)	**What would be the expected outcome? How will this be monitored?** (Include description of system, personnel and time)

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