

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 September 2006

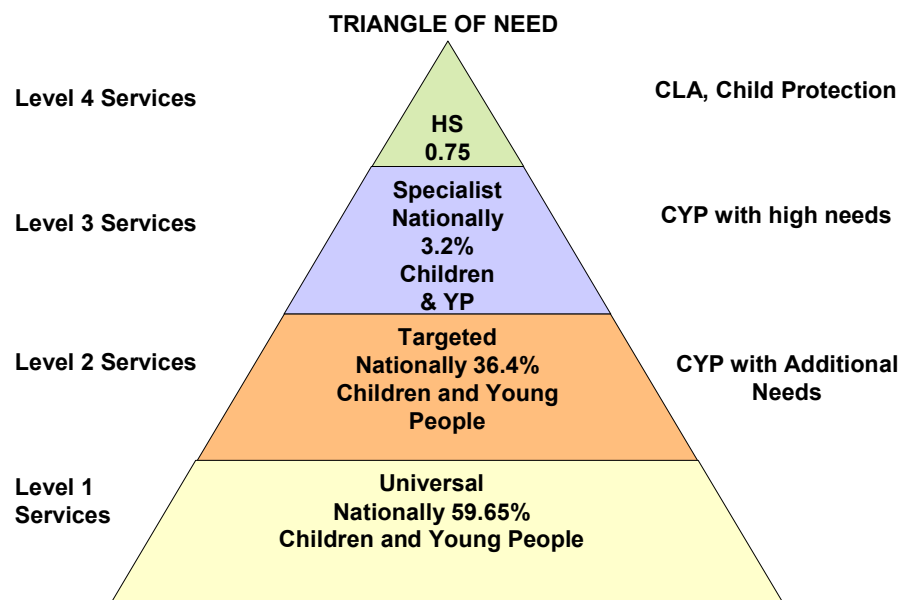
Anti-Bullying Policies and Practices

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Scrutiny Committee of the work of the Children's Trust sub group for All Children and Young People in relation to anti-bullying.

Background

2. The Children's Trust consists of statutory partners who are working towards integrating services for children and young people to enable them to meet the outcomes of Every Child Matters. It has four main sub groups working on its priorities:
 - Children and Young People with Emotional and Behavioural and other Mental Health Problems
 - Disabled Children and Young People
 - Looked After Children
 - All Children and Young People
3. Children's services operate at 4 levels of need



4. All children and young people access universal services such as schools and health and almost 60% of them will never require anything more than these Level 1 services. Thirty six percent of children have additional needs and will require the services of at least one Level 2 service at some point in their lives. Less than 4% of children and young people require high cost Levels 3 and 4 provision. The All Children and Young People's sub group is working to reduce the difficulties children face and tip the balance of costly intervention by preventing them from becoming vulnerable and requiring Level 2 services.

Main Considerations for the Council

5. The All Children and Young People's sub group of the Trust is championing two main areas: Anti-Bullying and The Environment as these are two areas that young people feel passionate about improving. Evidence has highlighted the need for development in anti-bullying. This is the second year Wiltshire County Council has commissioned a Health Related Behaviour Survey (Balding). It is conducted by Exeter University in June and results are still being analysed. This year it involved 3,858 children and young people from Year 4 (8-9 year olds), Year 6 (10-11 year olds), Year 8 (12-13 year olds) and Year 10 (14-15 year olds). There were 2,508 primary aged children and 1,350 secondary aged pupils from Wiltshire schools. Different questionnaires were given to primary and secondary pupils. Of the children and young people asked,

'Are you afraid of going to school because of, sometimes, often or very often being bullied?'

The results reveal:

Year 4	Year 6	Year 8	Year 10
Female	Female	Female	Female
45%	35%	40%	34%
Male	Male	Male	Male
37%	24%	36%	20%

With such powerful results, it is clear that the All Children and Young People's Sub Group of the Children's Trust is right in championing anti-bullying as a number one priority. If children are being bullied they can not learn!

6. The four Wiltshire County Council corporate priorities this sub group is working towards includes:
 - Ensure that every school provides good quality education and improve the levels of attainment of children and young people in Wiltshire
 - Support parents, families and communities to improve the outcomes for children and young people and safeguard children
 - Implement the strategy for pupils with special educational needs
 - In consultation with young people improve youth work

However, it needs to be remembered that the work of this group extends far beyond the County Council.

7. The Local Area Agreement sets out to gain greater autonomy for local action through an agreed set of outcomes and plans. The outcomes require shared commitment and

partnership working and are an important opportunity to deal with intractable local issues preventing children and young people from thriving. There are four blocks:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older people
- Safer and Stronger Communities and
- Economic Development and Enterprise.

The work of the Children's Trust will form the majority of the Children and Young People block. Anti-bullying is part of the strategy to improve the emotional well-being of children and young people.

8. The All Children and Young People's sub group of the Children's Trust is chaired by Stephanie Denovan. It is a small group consisting of Ann Shelley Director of Public Health for Kennet and North Wiltshire PCT, Linda Cantillon Manager of ask representing the voluntary sector, Bindy Shah Chief Executive of Connexions, Bridget Wayman Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Mandy Marshall a parent representative and Peter Fanshawe Manager of the Children and Young People's Partnership. It has been in existence for a short time. It has the following groups reporting to it:

- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Extended Schools and Children's Centres Strategic Board (ExCCeS)
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Children's Fund
- 14-19 Youth Matters

The group recently wrote to all statutory children's services represented at the Children's Trust to ask;

What does your service do to promote and enable all children and young people to be free from circumstances in which they are bullied, ridiculed, or subjected to any form of discrimination or harassment?

and

How do you feel the Children's Trust Board could work together more effectively to promote anti-bullying for all the children and young people of Wiltshire?

Of 19 partners surveyed, only 4 returned the proforma. Find the responses in **Appendix 1** from: Schools Branch Health Promotion Team, Wiltshire Police, The Youth Development Service and ask the Children's Information Service. This was a disappointing response probably because partners do not recognise the indirect impact of their services on reducing bullying. However, responses from the 4 show some innovative practice, real commitment and good ideas to reduce bullying. More than anything this highlighted the need for an Anti-Bullying Strategy, which all partners could sign up to. Find the first draft of this Strategy in **Appendix 2** which is being consulted upon.

9. All strategic and seniors managers throughout the Department for Children and Education in May 2006 discussed five areas that emerged from the All Children and Young People's sub group. Anti-bullying was one of these areas. They concluded:

Key Causes/Influences on this topic

- *Varying perceptions of what bullying is*
- *People need a sense of power*
- *Children and young people's self esteem*
- *Some children are more vulnerable to being bullied due to diversity and differences*
- *Some children and families are afraid to speak out against bullies*
- *Inconsistent systems to deal with bullying when it occurs*
- *Environment poor street lighting*
- *Media hype, negative image, fear of bullying*
- *Long term damage of bullying, slow sapping of self-esteem*
- *Low level persistent disruption of bullying*
- *Kudos of the bully amongst peers*
- *Feelings of inadequacy and insecurity cause people to bully*

Factors which could lead to a more positive outcome

- *Clearer definition of bullying, shared by statutory partners of the Children's Trust*
- *Greater understanding and tolerance of the diversity of different groups*
- *How to ensure punishment fits the crime*
- *Build resilience and better coping strategies when bullying occurs*
- *Develop an open culture to discuss freely when bullying occurs*

What could be done differently?

- *Recognise and disseminate good practice in relation to anti-bullying*
- *Map bullying hot spots throughout Wiltshire*
- *Public statement of commitment to anti-bullying from the Children's Trust Board*
- *Involve children and young people in how to improve anti-bullying work*
- *Reduce exclusions from schools*
- *Gather information from all statutory partners about what they do to reduce bullying*

These ideas have been incorporated into the draft Anti-Bullying Strategy

10. The Health Promotion Team in Schools Branch consists of three full time and two part time staff: a Healthy Schools Co-ordinator, an adviser for Personal Social Health Education, two Drugs Education Co-ordinators (one part time) and the part time Life Education Centre Co-ordinator. They are colocated in Southgate House in Devizes with the Primary Care Trust. They are funded from Standards Fund Grant 27a and DAAT. The work of the team is under review as the agenda for Every Child Matters is changing rapidly. There is not enough capacity in the team to absorb all the work that needs to be completed and there is no dedicated anti-bullying adviser/co-ordinator.
11. Since September 1998 all schools have been required to have an anti-bullying policy, which for many is part of their Behaviour Policy. These policies are not written to a national standard as they need to reflect the specific requirements of local schools and so that each

school takes responsibility for this issue. The danger of providing a policy 'off the shelf' (or indeed from the Internet) is that it is not owned by the staff that need to put it into practice. Many schools have a School Council who are directly involved in influencing these Behaviour Policies. **Appendix 3** shows how the School Council at Fynamore Primary School, Calne have been directly involved in anti-bullying. Results of this survey were then analysed and used to raise awareness of the damaging effect of bullying. This and other events were completed as part of the national Anti-Bullying week in November. This is called Walk Tall week in Wiltshire and the Schools Branch Health Promotion Team encourage such events each year.

12. There is no national requirement to collect data on bullying from schools or elsewhere. There is a requirement for schools to keep a racist incident log book and we monitor, evaluate and respond to these incidents of bullying through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. We do not have capacity in the team at present to collect data on incidents of bullying although we recognise the need to collect not just school's data but from all other children's services too. We will research how other Local Authorities promote anti-bullying.
13. Parliament's Education and Skills Select Committee has announced plans to hold an inquiry into bullying in English schools. The inquiry will investigate:
 - How to define bullying
 - The extent of homophobic and racist bullying
 - Why people become bullies and why people are bullied
 - The effect of bullying on academic achievement, physical and mental health and social and emotional well-being

The inquiry is to be headed by Barry Sheerman MP. Given the evidence that Wiltshire has, this inquiry is long overdue. It has been recognised that there is no co-ordinated national strategy on bullying among children and young people and there needs to be a more strategic approach to the way we tackle bullying.

14. Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship is an integral part of the National Curriculum. Its purpose is to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of their school and community. Through this work they recognise their own worth, work well with others and become responsible for their own learning and well-being. They reflect on their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. They also find out about the main political and social institutions that affect their lives and about their responsibilities, rights and duties as individuals and members of communities. They learn to understand and respect humanity, diversity and differences so that they can form the effective relationships that are an essential part of life and learning. Anti-bullying is an important part of this work.
15. The Primary National Strategy has produced additional PSHE work mainly related to emotional literacy and forming relationships, which is being trialled in some of our primary schools. It is called SEAL, Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning. New work is being

trialled in some schools who are identified as lead schools within their cluster for this work. The SEAL materials are targeted at schools where the behaviour of pupils is not the worst because it is a preventative approach. Themes include, 'Getting on and falling out' and 'Say no to bullying'. The Secondary National Strategy has also produced additional PSHE work related to emotional literacy called SEBS, Social, Emotional and Behaviour Strategy. An emotionally literate person is able to:

- Know and manage their emotions
- Motivate themselves effectively
- Recognise and respond to other people's feelings and
- Handle relationships productively

This work has a direct link to anti-bullying as it equips children and young people with the skills to prevent themselves from being vulnerable to being bullied, to cope when they are bullied and to recognise that bullying is wrong and destructive.

16. Within the Department for Children and Education there is a Behaviour and Attendance Strategy Group chaired by Stephanie Denovan. It is working on a number of issues, such as reducing exclusions, improving behaviour and attendance, developing smooth transitions at key points in a child's life, early intervention and emotional literacy. This work has direct links to anti-bullying and the group enables a co-ordinated approach to tackle some intractable issues.
17. Each year the Local Authority receives data for its Annual Performance Assessment (APA). **Appendix 4** shows the data closest to anti-bullying. This information comes from Ofsted inspections of schools. It is based on the 25 primary and 3 secondary school inspections completed at the time. It shows no real problems with behaviour, the personal development and well-being of learners or their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, this data masks underlying issues because with only one day for one inspector in our smallest schools and a huge reduction since the new Ofsted Framework of September 2005 in the depth and breadth of inspection, anti-bullying issues do not emerge. These results only represent 10% of our schools.
18. The APA Summary of 2005, see **Appendix 5** within the. Making a Positive Contribution, section stated:

The promotion of social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and the prevention of bullying in secondary schools

was an area for improvement. This was based on one secondary school's results only. However, the SEBS work as previously explained in paragraph 13 is meeting that need.

Risk Assessment

19. The main risk identified is that children and young people will continue to fail to fulfill their potential both socially and academically unless all children's services combine efforts to eradicate bullying and militate against its destructive effects.

Financial Implications

20. It is not anticipated that additional funding for anti-bullying will be forthcoming in the immediate future. However, following the Select Committee's inquiry into bullying, we may see national funds being channelled towards this cause. The review of posts and responsibilities in Schools Branch Health Promotion Team will need to look at what we can stop doing in order to pick up what needs to be completed in relation to the fast changing Every Child Matters agenda.

Action Required

21. That the Scrutiny Committee endorses the approach to anti-bullying across all children's services in Wiltshire.

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Unpublished documents relied upon in the production of this report: