>> FORMULATING A POLICY

Raising awareness of bullying issues using the strategies listed in the previous suggestion card will encourage pupils to think about **what they understand** by the term bullying and the **types of strategies they would like to see put in place** to resolve this issue. To ensure that pupils' views on both issues feed into their school's anti-bullying policy, their ideas could be collected by:

Setting up a 'How to tackle bullying' suggestion box where pupils could anonymously post their ideas to these questions	**Distributing a questionnaire which pupils fill in on paper or via the school website**	**Running a writing competition entitled 'If I had one million pounds to stop bullying in my school I would…' (Idea from www.kidscape. co.uk)**	**Running a poster competition to generate ideas for policies, so long as pupils decide the criteria for the anti-bullying poster**

In addition to gathering pupil's views - teachers, management and governors should also be encouraged to reflect on their own definitions of bullying and their strategies for dealing with this problem on the basis that:

1. Innovative ideas for resolving bullying can be gleaned from a wide range of sources.
2. Policy can be better tailored to the needs of an individual school.
3. Everyone is publicly assured that bullying behaviours will not be tolerated.

Whether a school is writing a new anti-bullying policy or revising an existing anti-bullying policy, self assessment questionnaires are available which can assist with this process. These can be downloaded from the ABA website www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk, Save the Children www.savethechildren.org.uk and from the website www.education.unisa.edu.au

An anti-bullying policy should include:

a. A clearly worded statement that bullying among or between any member of the school community (whether this person is a pupil, teacher, lunchtime assistant, secretary, caretaker or someone else) will not be tolerated;

b. A definition of bullying agreed by staff and pupils;

c. A rationale on how this policy fits with the school's mission statement;

d. An open acknowledgement that bullying can be linked to racism, homophobia, sexism, and/or disability and identification of the symptoms of bullying;

e. Strategies to prevent bullying;

f. Information on how this policy links with other school policies on, for example, discipline, pastoral care, child protection, special needs and behaviour management;

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g. Guidelines to deal with bullying incidents and how these will be implemented e.g. pastoral provision, classroom management, guidelines or sanctions;

h. Procedures for recording incidents;

i. Actions to be taken if bullying persists;

j. Procedures for reviewing the anti-bullying policy.

Once the bullying policy is agreed:

It should provide clear guidelines for teachers and pupils on specific actions that will be taken if bullying occurs and what specific strategies of support will be put in place for the victim.

It should be translated into child friendly language and posted in a prominent place in the school.

Copies of this policy should be inserted into pupils' homework diaries and displayed in school corridors and classrooms as a visible means of showing the priority a school credits to this issue.

Further Information:

>> Guidance on what a bullying policy should consist of and whether it should be part of, or separate to, more general behaviour/disciplinary/pastoral care policies can be found in the 'Pastoral Care for Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour' (DENI 2001), 'Integrating Personal Safety programmes into the Curriculum' (CCEA 1999), Save the Children 'Focus on Bullying' (2002) for post primary students and 'Something to Say' (2005) for primary school pupils, and the KIDSCAPE website www.kidscape.org.uk

>> Guidance on definitions of bullying can be found at www.NCB.org.uk/aba or www.anti-bullyingalliance.org

>> For ideas on how to consult with pupils visit www.consultingpupils.co.uk and read Save the Children (2001) 'Reaction consultation tool kit'. Mencap have also produced a leaflet called 'They won't believe me' to help parents, carers and teachers of pupils with special educational needs to think about what constitutes bullying behaviours. These leaflets can be downloaded from www.mencap.org.uk

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