

In Essex

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Anti-bullying Policy

Vision Statement

'In Essex we are agreed that bullying in any form is unacceptable. We aim to empower all individuals, institutions and communities to challenge, remedy and prevent bullying and create a culture where the rights of the individual are valued and upheld.'

Essex County Council's guiding principles for preventing and responding to bullying:

- 1 County Councillors and officers of Essex County Council adhere to the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child in respect of the care of children/young people for whom they have a responsibility.
- 2 All children and young people, regardless of educational need and individual difference, have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and have a responsibility to treat others in the same way.
- 3 Staff within Essex County Council recognise that bullying is an issue that must also be taken seriously.
- 4 Essex County Council recognises that work to minimise/prevent bullying is essential as the basis for an effective anti-bullying strategy.
- 5 In tackling bullying all officers of Essex County Council whether working directly or in an advisory role, seek to achieve positive outcomes for those who are bullied and those who engage in bullying behaviour.
- 6 All instances of racist bullying must be treated as racist incidents and recorded in line with the procedures explained in *Dealing with and Reporting Racist Incidents in School* (Essex CC, 2003).
- 7 This policy document needs to be read in conjunction with the guidance document '*Creating a Telling School*' provided to all schools in Essex.

Definition: for the purposes of this document, children and young people are referred to as children. Child is defined as any young person up to the age of 18 years.





Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The vision statement was jointly written by senior managers from education, health, social services and the police, along with representatives of voluntary agencies and headteachers. Taking account of the DfES guidance ‘*Don’t Suffer in Silence*’ (2000, updated 2002) and what research tells us about effective ways of tackling bullying (see Smith (2004)) it was agreed that the recommended strategy should be the ‘support group’ approach.
- 1.2 It was agreed that bullying is not just an issue for schools or a difficulty confined to children. In Essex it is acknowledged that bullying happens in schools and other educational establishments, the workplace and the wider community. If it is to be tackled effectively, a consistent approach needs to be adopted. The ‘support group’ approach advocated for schools, shares a common philosophy and principles, therefore, with the Family Group Conferencing (FRG) model employed by Social Care and work around restorative justice undertaken by the Youth Offending Teams.
- 1.3 All these approaches aim to develop a sense of empathy that in turn leads to an increase in positive behaviours and a reduction in bullying, offending and other socially unacceptable behaviours.

- 1.4 Our commitment to early intervention and prevention is articulated in *The Essex Behaviour Support Plan* (2004 - 2007) and *The Special Educational Needs Action Plan* (2003). Bullying is not a problem that can be managed on a purely reactive basis when incidents of bullying are reported.

Section 2: Role of Schools

- 2.1 Schools have a responsibility to work proactively to minimise the likelihood of bullying behaviour occurring and to deal with any incidents that do occur in a way that is most likely to stop the bullying and support both bullies and the targets of bullying.
- 2.2 Essex schools wishing to develop preventative approaches to bullying and/or the ‘support group’ approach can access advice and training through the Advisory and Inspection Service and the Special Educational Needs and Psychology Service. A range of school based and county training courses are also available. *The Essex and Southend Healthy Schools Partnership* provides useful tools for self-evaluation and action planning.



Section 3: Role of the local authority

3.1 The local authority supports schools in tackling bullying by:

- providing training and support materials relating to preventative measures including climate and ethos;
- publishing guidance and offering training for schools in how to produce an anti-bullying policy (*Creating a Telling School* (Essex CC and Lucky Duck, 2005));
- publishing guidance and offering training for schools in the support group approach (*Creating a Telling School* (Essex CC and Lucky Duck, 2005));
- publishing guidance and offering training for schools in respect of racist bullying (*Dealing with and Reporting Racist Incidents In School* (Essex CC, 2003));
- maintaining a Behaviour Support Service organised into area teams each with a management group with local headteacher representatives to ensure that they remain responsive to local needs;
- providing appropriate induction and on-going professional development training for local authority support staff;
- offering advice and support to parents;
- carrying out targeted work in schools causing concern.

3.2 The Essex local authority anti-bullying group was set up to review practice and, informed by research, develop a coherent response to bullying for Essex schools. The group organised the conferences and training in the ‘support group’ approach for headteachers and governors from all Essex schools. In future the group will comprise members from the Advisory and Inspection Service, Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, Education Welfare Service, Special Educational Needs and Psychology Service, Behaviour Support and Social Care. The aims of the group are to:

- ensure that high quality training, resources and support are available to Essex County Council Staff and schools;
- promote a range of preventative anti-bullying measures and the support group approach;
- monitor the implementation and impact of the local authority strategy;
- share examples of good practice;
- work with other agencies to ensure a consistent approach to anti-bullying work in Essex

3.3 The Essex local authority anti-bullying group have worked with Lucky Duck Publishing to produce ‘*Creating a Telling School*’, a guide to producing effective anti-bullying policy in schools. Copies will be provided for every Essex school and will complement the advice and support AIS and SENaPS staff provide and offer training in the ‘support group’ approach.

Section 4: Contacts

Advisory and Inspection Service
Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
Education Safeguarding Service
Education Welfare Service
Essex and Southend Healthy Schools Partnership
Special Educational Needs and Psychology Service: Behaviour Support
Violence Reduction Co-ordinator, Senior HR Consultant

References:

Children's Act 2004

Department for Education and Skills.
Don't Suffer in Silence.
DfES, 2000 updated 2003.

Department for Education and Skills.
Safeguarding Children in Education.
DfES, Guidance Ref.LEA/0027/2004.

Essex and Southend Healthy Schools Partnership
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Lucky Duck Publishing, 2000

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Child and Adolescent Mental Health.
2005, 9(3), 98-103.



Department of Health, Home Office and Department of Education and Employment.
Working Together to Safeguard Children.
The Stationery Office, 1999.
ISBN: 0113223099

Essex Child Protection Committee.
The Blue Book: Essex Child Protection Guidelines.
Essex Child Protection Committee, 2000.
Electronic format available on
www.essexcc.gov.uk/ecpc

Essex County Council.
Creating a Telling School.
Essex County Council and Lucky Duck Publishing, 2005.

Essex County Council.
Dealing With and Reporting Racist Incidents in School.
ECC, 2003.

Essex County Council.
Promoting Positive Behaviour: The Essex Approach.
ECC, 1998

**This document is issued by Essex County Council.
You can contact us in the following ways:**

By post:

Special Educational Needs and
Psychology Service: Behaviour Support
E2 County Hall
Chelmsford
CM2 6WN

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