



Combating Bullying: A Redbridge Framework for Organisations working with Children and Young People

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Context

- Bullying and anti-bullying work currently have a high profile nationally and internationally
- Bullying, like other forms of aggression, is a feature of human interaction, and can happen anywhere, including youth and community settings, on public transport, on the street, in the park, at the shops, at clubs, in school. Use of technology means that targets can be vulnerable anywhere, even when they are at home.
- Bullying is a safeguarding issue: we all have a responsibility to work to keep children safe.

Vision

In line with Every Child Matters (ECM) , Redbridge Council's vision is to improve the lives of young people by ensuring that they are:

- Healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

Redbridge Council recognises that bullying causes emotional and physical harm to children. In order to realise the ECM vision, Redbridge Council is committed to addressing bullying. We believe that bullying in all its forms is unacceptable. We want our young people to learn, live and socialise in an environment where they feel safe, value difference, recognise the importance of their relationships with others, support one another and treat each other with respect. We want our young people to have the understanding to recognise the effect their actions have on others, the skills to take responsibility for the ways they have behaved and the expertise to put things right when they go wrong.

Bullying is a complex social phenomenon. It needs to be addressed at the level of the organisation, groups and individuals. While it can happen in most settings, the specific environment the children are in means that it takes on many forms, and that this can change over time.

Writing an anti-bullying policy

We believe that organisations should have an anti-bullying policy which helps them to achieve the following aims:

1. To decrease bullying
2. To build children's skills to address bullying themselves, whether they are targets or bystanders
3. To support bullies to change their behaviour

Having a policy helps everyone know what to do to reduce bullying and support young people. All organisations are different: some organisations will have done a lot of work on this and others will just be starting out. Therefore some will have a straightforward set of principles whereas other organisations will have developed a more comprehensive policy. Getting started on writing down a policy that everyone can agree on is an important first step.

The following are areas that you may want to include in your policy, but not all of them will be as relevant or important for all organisations. (This template is based on work by P.K..Smith on anti-bullying policies)

Anti-Bullying Policy Template	
Section	Content
Statement of values	Organisational values about the rights and responsibilities of the people working in the organisation Reference to Every Child Matters and other relevant legislation
Aims of the policy	Statement of what you want the policy to achieve
Links with other policies	Behaviour Management; Child Protection And Health and Safety etc.
Define bullying behaviour	Define bullying, making it clear that it is different from other forms of aggressive behaviour Mention the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct physical bullying (e.g. kicks, hits) • direct verbal bullying (e.g. threats, insults, nasty teasing) • relational bullying (rumours, social exclusion) • material bullying (extortion of money, damage to belongings) • cyber-bullying (emails, text messages, phone calls) • homophobic bullying • racial bullying or harassment Talk about bullying of children by adults or adults by children

Statement about how you will generally aim to prevent bullying	<p>Mention any form of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, or creating a safe environment</p> <p>Discuss issues of peer support</p> <p>Mention the role and responsibility of all adults in the organisation</p> <p>Mention the importance of a well-organised space and activities and adequate targeted adult supervision</p> <p>Discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. english as an additional language; learning needs)</p>
Set out how you work through an incident of bullying	<p>State what the victim of bullying should do</p> <p>Say what bystanders to a bullying incident should do</p> <p>Say how adults who become aware of a bullying incident could respond</p> <p>Mention what a parent should do if they become aware of bullying</p> <p>Make clear the sanctions for an incident and whether these are dependent on the type or severity of the incident</p> <p>Mention follow up to see if the interventions were successful</p> <p>Discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists</p> <p>Suggest ways of supporting the target</p> <p>Suggest ways of helping the person doing the bullying to change their behaviour</p> <p>Discuss when and how the parents will be informed that their child has been bullied or is bullying another child</p>
Statement about how the impact of the policy will be evaluated, and how this will inform reviewing the policy	<p>State that reports of bullying will be recorded</p> <p>State who is responsible for co-ordinating the system</p> <p>Mention review and updating of the policy at least every two years, using information from the bullying record forms to identify best practice.</p>

Further ideas for developing a policy

If you are planning to spend more time developing your policy this is a framework that many settings have found useful.

This involves a four stage cycle: prepare, plan, do and review

<p>Stage One: Prepare</p> <p>Establish a Framework for Policy Making and Consultation :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a lead person • Decide who will be working on the policy • Establish the roles of the people on the working party • Devise a time-scale • Consult with adults, volunteers and young people • Consult with partners e.g. local police; transport companies; tenants
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<p>associations; schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan in opportunities for monitoring and review
<p>Stage Two: Plan</p>
<p>Engage in, collecting and making sense of data in your setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out the particular needs and concerns of the children and young people you work with and the adults that support them. • Use questionnaires, surveys and interviews to find out what concerns the young people and adults in your organisation have about bullying. Useful questions can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much bullying is happening? • What sort of bullying are people experiencing? • When does it happen? • Where does it happen?
<p>Stage Three: Do</p>
<p>Devise a policy that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your setting's statement of values and aims of the policy • A definition of bullying • A statement about preventative strategies • Information and guidelines about how to respond to bullying incidents
<p>Stage Four: Review</p>
<p>Reflection and Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the policy and its impact at least every two years • Evaluate what parts of the policy are working well • Share best practice and new ways of working • Plan changes to policy and practice • Include how reflection and review will be built into your anti-bullying policy • State what records will be kept about bullying and how they will be used

Recording bullying

Recording bullying is a very useful way to find out if your policy is working. On the next page is an example of a form you can use.

This guidance was produced by Kathryn Gibb, anti-bullying coordinator, and the Redbridge anti-bullying steering group.

Sample record form for bullying incidents

Date	
What happened	
Who was involved	
Target	Bystanders/ onlookers
Person who did the harm	
Action Taken	
Follow up- 6 weeks later. Does the target now feel safe?	
This form was completed by:	