SUMMARY REPORT

Tackling Bullying:
Listening to the views of children and young people

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Thomas Coram Research Unit
Institute of Education 2003
Foreword

Bullying is a matter of concern to all of us. It can make children’s experience of school miserable and at times frightening. It is extraordinary to remember that, until recently, bullying was dismissed as ‘a natural part of growing up’. Many children believed that they should suffer in silence, that there was a code of honour that prevented them asking for help. From the day the helpline opened, ChildLine has encouraged bullied children to speak out and ask for help. For six years bullying has been the biggest single reason for children to call ChildLine, with around 20,000 calls a year. If bullying is not tackled promptly and in the right way, the consequences can be very destructive.

To tackle it effectively, it is vital that the voices of children and young people are heard. That is why we decided to conduct a research project that would seek out and listen to the experiences and views of children and young people.

Researchers at the Thomas Coram Research Unit conducted the research on our behalf. The findings are summarised in this report. Children and young people from a variety of regions and schools were asked about their experiences of bullying and their schools’ responses to it. They also gave their views on how best to tackle bullying, the different options that are available to those who have been bullied and the relative effectiveness of these options.

The research revealed that bullying is widespread, and affects children of different ages, boys and girls. However, bullying does not occur equally in every school. Certain schools seem particularly effective in preventing bullying from taking hold.

One of the researchers’ conclusions is that schools should develop anti-bullying strategies by starting with pupils’ experiences of bullying. Whole-school anti-bullying approaches, which involve staff and pupils actively, and stress the importance of listening to children, taking bullying seriously and taking appropriate action to tackle it, are important. This research, by asking children what they think, is a significant step in ensuring that anti-bullying strategies are truly child focused and effective.

We do not believe that we have done enough to tackle the problem of bullying in the past. Bullying not only scars the lives of too many children, it also reflects a serious weakness in our education system. The government is determined to ensure that a concerted attack on bullying is at the heart of its school standards agenda. Our joint work must be the springboard for a serious, effective and sustained programme of action. There is much to be done, and together we can do it.

Esther Rantzen OBE, Chair of ChildLine

Ivan Lewis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Young People and Adult Skills

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the many people who provided support and assistance during the course of this research project, and in the preparation of this report.

In particular, we would like to thank the members of the project Advisory Group: Maggie Turner, Merrilee Guarini, Lindsay Gilbert and Lucy Read from ChildLine; Liz Ison, Ashley Haworth-Roberts and Yemi Raimi at the DfES; Amanda Dennison, Millennium School; David Moore, OFSTED; David Thompson, University of Sheffield; Martin Spafford, George Mitchell School; and the pupils of Acland Burghley School: Alberta Wilson, Poppy Krivine, Sara Ricketts, Victor Tsoi, and Miles Kiernan.

We would also like to thank Dr Marjorie Smith, Professor Peter Aggleton and Charlie Owen at the Thomas Coram Research Unit for their helpful comments in the preparation of this report. The support of Antonia Simon, Annabelle Stapleton and Steff Hazlehurst at TCRU was also much appreciated.

Finally, we would like to thank the schools and pupils who took part in this study. This research project would not have been possible without their involvement, enthusiasm and commitment to finding better ways of tackling bullying in schools.

The views expressed in this report are the authors’ and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education and Skills.
1. Introduction

About This Study
This study investigated the perspectives of children and young people concerning ‘what works’ in tackling bullying. The research, which was sponsored by ChildLine, a leading children’s charity and funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), aims to explore why, despite the almost universal introduction of anti-bullying policies by schools, children continue to call ChildLine in large numbers to ask for help in dealing with bullying. What might be the reasons for the apparent gap between anti-bullying policies on paper and anti-bullying practice in schools? The Thomas Coram Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London, was commissioned to undertake a survey and a series of focus groups with children and young people in primary and secondary schools to explore this issue.

More specifically, the aims of the study were to:
- explore children’s understanding and experience of bullying
- investigate children’s own responses to bullying
- examine children’s views concerning adult responses to bullying
- identify the support needs of children and young people who experience bullying
- explore the opinions of children and young people concerning anti-bullying strategies in the future, and young people’s involvement in their development

In addressing these aims, the study focused on the views and experiences of primary (Year 5) and secondary (Year 8) pupils.

Policy Context
Bullying has become a key issue for public policy in recent decades, following widespread public and professional concern about the negative effects of bullying on students’ academic attainment and emotional well-being (DfEE, 1999). Alongside policy developments, demand from teachers and parents for practical information and guidance on ‘what works’ in tackling bullying has grown apace. In 2000, the government revised and re-launched Bullying: Don’t Suffer in Silence, which provides extensive evidence-based guidance to teachers, pupils and parents on effective anti-bullying initiatives (DfES, 2000). This was further updated in 2002. However, a review of the literature undertaken for ChildLine, concluded that less attention has been paid to children’s perceptions and views about what works in tackling bullying, and that this represented an important gap in our knowledge concerning the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies.

This report offers a summary of the key findings. Information on how to obtain the full report is provided on page 12.

Key Findings

Prevalence of Bullying
- Over half of primary (51%) and secondary school pupils (54%) thought that bullying was ‘a big problem’ or ‘quite a problem’ in their school.
- Just over half (51%) of pupils in Year 5 reported that they had been bullied during the term, compared with just over a quarter (28%) of pupils in Year 8.

School Effectiveness
- Over 60% of pupils in both age groups thought that their school was ‘very good’ or ‘quite good’ at dealing with bullying. However, some schools were perceived by pupils to be more effective at dealing with bullying than others.
- Within each school, some teachers were identified as better at dealing with bullying than others. Such teachers were reported to be better at listening to pupils, more prepared to take them seriously, and to take ‘firm but fair’ action.
Pupils’ Responses to Bullying

- When attempting to decide how best to respond to bullying, pupils engaged in a complex process of risk assessment. Each possible course of action was identified as having a number of potential risks and benefits attached. No tidy solutions or easy remedies were identified.

- The three most helpful factors in preventing, or helping pupils to deal with bullying were friendships, avoidance strategies, and learning to ‘stand up for yourself’.

- Telling teachers about bullying was associated with a wide range of risks, particularly in relation to possible breaches of confidentiality, failure to act on reported incidents of bullying, and an inability to protect pupils from retaliatory action on the part of perpetrators. On the other hand, some pupils reported that telling teachers could help to stop the bullying.

- Parents were valued for offering emotional support and advice, and for raising concerns about bullying with teachers – if this was what their son or daughter wanted them to do. However, pupils also feared that parents might not believe them, or might over-react and make matters worse. Some pupils were concerned that by telling their parents about bullying they might start a family argument or cause their parents to feel worried and anxious on their behalf.

- Confidential sources of advice, such as counselling services and voluntary organisations working with children and young people were identified as an important course of support. Such organisations were reported as enabling pupils to express their feelings, consider the options available to them, and to have some control over the pace of disclosure, should they decide to tell a teacher or parent about bullying.

The report concludes that anti-bullying strategies need to address the realities of children’s experience of bullying and that more direct work with children is needed to develop and implement anti-bullying strategies.
2. FINDINGS

About Bullying

What is Bullying?
In focus groups and in the questionnaire survey, pupils provided clear and comprehensive definitions of bullying. Their understanding of bullying was that it could include verbal and physical abuse, theft, threatening behaviour, and coercion. Bullying was also understood as behaviour intended to cause distress or harm. Pupils identified a broad spectrum of behaviours of varying severity that could be encompassed within a definition of bullying and the negative impact bullying could have on pupils’ sense of well-being and personal safety. Their descriptions of bullying represented a narrative of vulnerability, inequality and abuse within a complex web of power relations between pupils. Vulnerability to bullying was described as the result of personal and individual characteristics, such as physical size or appearance, or the result of more structured inequalities (such as racism, sexism or homophobia). Typically, definitions of bullying included some or all of the following elements:

- Bullying is when someone picks on someone else because they are different – their race, height, weight, or looks. (It’s about) prejudice and discrimination and when someone gets hurt physically or mentally, or when someone is not respected.
  
  Girl, Year 8

- Bullying is when people force others, usually smaller people, to do what they want.
  
  Boy, Year 5

- Bullying is intentionally causing physical or mental damage to others, like attacking them for no reason frequently, teasing them frequently, or even sexually, such as rape.
  
  Girl, Year 8

How Big a Problem is Bullying?
- Just over half (51%) of Year 5 pupils reported that they had been bullied during the term, compared with just over a quarter (28%) of Year 8 pupils. Considerable variation was reported in the level of bullying between schools.
- Girls were almost as likely as boys to have been bullied in both age groups. In Year 8, a higher proportion of Black and Asian pupils (33%) reported that they had been bullied this term, compared with pupils of other ethnic groups (30%) or white pupils (26%).

What Are the Most Common Forms of Bullying?
Name-calling was reported as the most prevalent form of bullying for pupils in Years 5 and 8. Bullying involving physical aggression was less common, but nevertheless was reported by a substantial proportion of pupils in both age groups. Behaviour resulting in social isolation (such as gossip, and the spreading of rumours) was also common for pupils in both years, but particularly for pupils in Year 5.

A minority of pupils reported sexist, racist and anti-gay abuse, although racist and sexist name-calling was more prevalent among primary than secondary school pupils: a fifth of pupils in Year 5 reported that they had been called racist names, compared with 6% of pupils in Year 8. 11% of pupils reported that they had been called anti-gay names. However, these forms of bullying were more prevalent in some schools than others.

Contrary to some research on gender and bullying, boys and girls in this study reported similar levels of physical bullying, name-calling, and social ostracism, although some forms of physical bullying were higher for boys in Year 8. Girls also reported a higher level of sexualised bullying than boys, 5% of pupils in Year 8 (mostly girls) reported that they had experienced unwanted sexual touching.
Although the numbers are small, it would appear that bullying by electronic communication is emerging as a new form of bullying: 4% of pupils in Year 8 reported that they had received nasty text messages and 2% had received nasty e-mail messages.

Responding To Bullying

How Good Is Your School At Dealing With Bullying?

According to pupils' memories and perceptions, the findings indicated that participating schools were more likely to approach bullying by introducing one-off initiatives, such as discussing the topic during assembly or lesson time, than by more targeted and on-going approaches, such as appointing anti-bullying counsellors or teachers designated with specific anti-bullying responsibilities.

In the questionnaire survey, a majority of pupils (over 60%) expressed positive views about their school's attempts to deal with bullying. However, secondary school pupils were less likely to give their school a glowing report: over a third of primary school pupils (36%) thought that their school was 'very good' at dealing with bullying, compared with just over 1 in 10 of secondary school students (12%).

Key elements in pupils' assessment of their school's effectiveness concerned the willingness of teachers to listen, to express empathy, and to act appropriately on the suggestions of pupils.

"The children suggest ways the playground could be made better and teachers and the Head, listen. They take notice. They change things."  
Girl, Year 5

"At this school, it is ok. We talk about it at assembly and at the school council."  
Boy, Year 8

Conversely, schools that had a poor reputation appeared to be less likely to listen to pupils, and to take their complaints seriously or to take firm action:

"I don’t think the school handles it very well. They say leave it for now, but if it happens again, come back. But when we do that and they say they are working on it, it never gets solved."  
Boy, Year 8

Setting a Good Example

With regard to the extent to which teachers might limit bullying behaviour by modelling pro-social behaviour, the majority of pupils of both age groups thought that teachers set a good example for how pupils should behave. However, pupils' views varied widely between schools. For example, in one primary school, 86% of pupils reported that teachers 'always' set a good example, compared with only 48% of pupils in a second primary school.

What Are The Most Effective Responses to Bullying?

In exploring pupil's own responses in dealing with bullying, the findings indicated that the three most helpful factors in preventing, or helping pupils to deal with bullying were friendships, avoidance strategies, and learning to 'stand up for yourself'. This section of the report discusses the costs and benefits of 'standing up for yourself', telling friends, telling teachers, telling parents and telling agencies outside the school.

1. Standing Up For Yourself

Being Assertive

For pupils in Year 5, more confidence was expressed in the potential of 'talking back' and other, more assertive forms of direct verbal communication with the bully, than pupils in Year 8. Approximately a quarter of pupils in Year 5 thought that communicating verbally in an assertive way with the bully would 'always' or 'usually' work. Less than 10% of pupils in Year 8 shared this view.
Hitting Back

Older pupils were more likely to believe that physical retaliation had a better chance of success: 23% of secondary school pupils and 15% of primary school pupils thought that ‘hitting back’ would ‘always’ or ‘usually’ work to stop bullying. Indeed, almost a third (31%) of pupils in Year 8 thought that learning a martial art might help to reduce the risk of bullying, although this was identified as a more long term strategy. However, in relation to gender, girls were less likely to support physical retaliation as an appropriate strategy. Black and Asian pupils expressed a higher degree of confidence in the positive potential of each of the strategies identified than white pupils, or pupils of other ethnic groups.

“It might not work because the person doing the hitting back might get into trouble.”

Girl, Year 5

Ignoring the Bully

A higher proportion of pupils in Year 5 were optimistic about the potential effectiveness of ignoring the bully: 38% thought that such a strategy would ‘always’ or ‘usually’ work, compared with only 14% of pupils in Year 8. A number of potential risks and benefits were associated with this strategy:

“They bully you to get you annoyed. So if you show you’re not annoyed, it will stop.”

Girl, Year 5

“It might not work because if you ignore them, the bully might do something worse.”

Boy, Year 5

2. Telling Friends

A large majority of pupils in Years 5 (68%) and 8 (71%) reported that they would find it easy to talk to a friend if they were being bullied, although younger pupils were more likely to talk to their mothers. This suggests that anti-bullying initiatives that take friendship networks into account are likely to be of considerable value to pupils.

Having a group of friends was identified as an important protective factor in preventing, and helping pupils to cope with, bullying. Unlike teachers and other adults, friends were in a position to witness bullying in and outside school, and to provide support when needed.

“It’s more comfortable talking to them. They’re with you when you get picked on, so they know about it.”

Boy, Year 8

“They might go up to them and say ‘why are you picking on X?’ Because a friend is a friend. You want them to stick up for you, and they get involved.”

Girl, Year 8

However, the main risk of involving a friend was that they might also start to be bullied.

“Sometimes, if they know you’re picked on, it might happen to them too.”

Boy, Year 5
3. Telling Teachers
Just over half (51%) of pupils in Year 5, but less than a third (31%) of pupils in Year 8, reported that they would find it easy to speak to a teacher about bullying. Telling teachers was associated with a wide range of risks, particularly in relation to possible breaches of confidentiality, failure to act on reported incidents of bullying, and an inability to protect pupils from retaliatory behaviour on the part of perpetrators.

Verbal bullying isn’t taken seriously by teachers. If you have some bruises, they might take some notice.

Girl, Year 8

If you tell your tutor, they have to tell someone else, and then they tell someone else. It’s like Chinese whispers.

Boy, Year 8

You get called a grass and a dobber, and you get beaten up.

Boy, Year 5

On the other hand, some pupils reported that telling teachers could help to stop the bullying or that, armed with relevant information, teachers might be less likely to punish a pupil should they decide to take matters into their own hands.

If you hit someone, and the teacher knows you’ve been bullied, they take that into consideration. If you don’t tell, they might think you’ve hit someone for no reason.

Boy, Year 8

Are Some Teachers Better at Dealing with Bullying Than Others?
Most pupils could identify a teacher that they would be most likely to speak to if they were being bullied. Such teachers were reported by pupils to be demonstrably better at listening to pupils, more prepared to take pupils seriously, ready to take appropriate action (but not without the consent of the victim), and to be ‘firm but fair’.

She (the teacher) is strict. People say strict teachers are bad but really, strict teachers are better at sorting it out.

Boy, Year 8

Our teacher is good…she bothers to find out what really happened. She takes you seriously. She sorts it out with the Head, or she will tell the parents.

Girl, Year 8

4. Telling Parents
Parents were identified as offering a potentially valuable source of help, advice and moral support. In particular, pupils reported that parents who listened to them and took their experiences seriously, helped them to cope with bullying. However, pupils also reported that telling parents could make matters worse (for example, by taking inappropriate or unilateral action, or by disagreeing about the best course of action).

Mums, dads, mates, can give advice.

Boy, Year 5

I know that if I tell my parents, they’ll believe me. There would be no question. And I know that if I wanted them to come to the school, they would.

Boy, Year 8

The risk of not being believed by a parent was identified as potentially very hurtful. Some were also concerned that, by talking about bullying, they might start a family argument. Other pupils also said that they would not tell a parent if they were being bullied, because they would not want to worry them or put them under pressure.

I wouldn’t tell my mum. She’d skin them.

Girl, Year 5

Your mum and dad might disagree about what to do, and then start arguing, and then they say it’s your fault. Telling your parents is a serious step. They might take action you don’t want.

Boy, Year 8
5. Seeking Outside Help

Pupils were asked if they would seek outside help to deal with bullying, such as talking to the police or a confidential telephone helpline. Pupils were also asked if there were any other sources of help they had found useful.

ChildLine

Pupils were divided about whether they would contact a telephone helpline, such as ChildLine. Younger pupils (39%) were considerably more likely to consider such an option than pupils in Year 8 (14%). Some pupils expressed the view that ChildLine might not know about the local context, and might therefore not be in a position to give constructive advice.

The Police

Only a small minority of pupils would consider talking to the police about bullying, although younger pupils (33%) were more likely than older pupils (11%) to consider such action. Nevertheless, in a small number of cases, pupils reported that they had been encouraged by their teachers to contact the police for help. A number of risks and benefits were associated with contacting the police:

"You might have to go to court"

Girl, Year 8

"I'd tell PC Smith. She would probably talk to them, and talk to their parents"

Girl, Year 8

Telling a Counsellor

In focus group discussions, a minority of pupils suggested that external counselling organisations might assist pupils to deal with bullying. In one focus group, pupils identified Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as a proven and effective source of help, while others mentioned counsellors and advice agencies targeted at children and young people. In another focus group, pupils reported that they were aware that the NSPCC might be able to help with bullying. However, others expressed surprise at this suggestion, as they thought that the NSPCC only dealt with adults who were cruel to children.

"A cousin of mine was being bullied and had a black eye and things. They told the NSPCC and it worked. I don’t know what they did"

Boy, Year 5

Confidential sources of support were also valued for enabling pupils to control the pace of disclosure. Equally important, no risks were associated with this course of action. Further, in the context of pupils’ concerns about breaches of confidentiality on the part of teachers and parents, the wider availability of confidential sources of help and advice may prove a valuable anti-bullying strategy.

"If you talk to a counsellor, it’s someone you don’t know. They don’t know your life story and they don’t tell no one nothing, unless you’re going to harm yourself or someone else. So it’s completely confidential. They realise how you’re feeling and it’s a lot easier than talking to a parent or a teacher"

Girl, Year 8

6. Involving Pupils in Decision-Making

In the questionnaire survey, pupils in Year 8 were asked about their interest in being involved in decision-making in dealing with incidents of bullying. Pupils were unsure about being involved if they were being bullied: 36% said that they would like to be involved in deciding what to do about bullying that involved them personally.

Pupils were less ambivalent about their potential involvement in developing school-wide anti-bullying initiatives. The majority (59%) of pupils in Year 8 expressed a willingness to be involved. Nevertheless, almost a quarter were unsure about whether they wanted to be involved or not; this suggests that some preparatory work may be necessary before joint discussions between teachers and pupils can develop.
The findings of this research project indicated that, when thinking about how to respond to bullying, children and young people engage in a complex process of risk assessment. Pupils identified a number of different ways of tackling bullying and explored the anticipated advantages and disadvantages of each option. No tidy solutions or easy remedies were identified. Consequently, pupils' discussions about ‘what works’ in tackling bullying might more accurately be re-framed as ‘what might work’.

Although it is common for adults to encourage pupils to report bullying, pupils of both age groups expressed a preference for ‘sorting it out’ and ‘standing up for themselves’. Alternative strategies necessarily involve pupils in the dilemmas and consequences associated with ‘telling’. It appears that, even if pupils decide to ‘tell’ an adult, they are very aware of the gap between how teachers and parents should respond to bullying, and how they actually respond. A pupil in Year 5 had this insight to offer on ‘telling’ and its aftermath:

“If the dinner ladies don’t help you, tell your teacher. If the teacher doesn’t help you, tell your mum. Then your mum will tell the headmistress. Then the headmistress will go and tell the parents of the bully. And the parents of the bully (pause)…well, some of the parents don’t care and just say ‘don’t do it again’.”

Boy, Year 5

In listening to children and young people talk about bullying, it is clear that they receive a number of mixed messages from adults (teachers and parents). These mixed messages might be summarised as follows:

- Adults (teachers and parents) claimed that bullying is a serious or ‘bad’ thing, but pupils’ experience is that bullying is often dismissed as ‘child’s play’
- Pupils are encouraged to report incidents of bullying, but when they do, pupils frequently felt that they are not listened to or believed
- Schools encouraged pupils to report bullying but are also perceived by pupils as unable to protect pupils from retaliatory action, particularly after school hours
- Teaching involves working and forming relationships with pupils, yet often teachers were perceived as taking complaints made by parents more seriously than complaints made by pupils
- Adults (teachers and parents) claimed that they could be trusted, but telling an adult about bullying was perceived as involving a risk that they would break promises of confidentiality
- Adults often told pupils not to fight back, but pupils (particularly in Year 8) found that fighting back works sometimes

These findings suggest that anti-bullying policies might be expected to have limited effect if they fail to take into account the realities of the child’s social world. For this reason, it would seem appropriate for schools to consider more ‘bottom up’ (rather than ‘top down’) responses to bullying, that attempt to involve pupils in decision-making at an individual and school-wide level. It is also clear that encouraging a child ‘to tell’ requires an adult willingness to listen. Often, pupils expressed a wish simply to speak to an adult in confidence, in order to unburden themselves, get advice and support, and to consider their options. Importantly, there were hardly any disadvantages and some considerable benefits associated with such a course of action, particularly in relation to pupils’ emotional well-being.

Nevertheless, the findings indicate that anti-bullying policies provide a useful starting point for tackling bullying. Indeed, some pupils highlighted different approaches that were described as working at least some of the time (e.g. school councils, peer group initiatives, discussing bullying regularly during assemblies, and during class time). Pupils also recommended that anti-bullying initiatives should be sustained over the long term.

In summary, the findings highlight the importance of:

- Developing anti-bullying strategies that start with pupils’ experiences of bullying, and which take into account the consequences of ‘telling’ for children and young people
- Providing accessible sources of confidential advice and support
- Adopting a sustained and multi-modal approach to bullying in recognition of children’s perceptions that some courses of action work some of the time, and that there are no sure or single solutions to the problem of bullying,
4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Children’s Participation

In recent years, government policy has made significant progress in recognising the importance of listening to children and young people, not only as a means of enhancing their participation as citizens, but also as a means of developing child-centred (and therefore more effective) services (Children and Young People’s Unit, 2001). We strongly recommend that:

- Schools develop more direct work with children and young people to enhance their participation in formulating and implementing anti-bullying strategies.
- Schools should develop a range of formal and informal approaches to working with children and young people that are age-appropriate, gender sensitive and culturally aware. More informal methods might be used to listen to primary school pupils’ views about bullying. More formal approaches, such as consulting schools councils about bullying, should be considered a priority for secondary schools. Consulting with pupils about anti-bullying strategies might also be undertaken by young people themselves, for example, as part of PSHE project work.
- In co-educational schools, and in ethnically diverse school populations, efforts should be made to discuss bullying and anti-bullying strategies in girls-only and Black and minority ethnic-only groups.
- Consulting with pupils on the development of anti-bullying strategies should be considered an on-going commitment on the part of schools, and not a one-off exercise.
- LEAs should facilitate the sharing of good practice between schools, between different children’s services, and with children’s organisations in the voluntary sector, concerning participatory approaches to working with children and young people in schools.
- Teachers should be offered training in participative approaches to working with children and young people as part of their initial and in-service training.
- In order to measure schools’ progress in listening to pupils and to facilitate the sharing of good practice, the methods used by schools to consult with children and young people about bullying and in the development of anti-bullying strategies should be included as a topic for OFSTED inspections.

A Child-Centred Approach

It is of key importance that anti-bullying strategies address the realities of children’s experience of bullying, and how they commonly respond to it. It is therefore recommended that:

- More attention is given to the role of friendships in the development of anti-bullying strategies. A number of different approaches may be adopted in this regard (such as the ‘buddy’ system and the ‘circle of friends’ model). Other and more informal methods of supporting the development of friendships, such as activity-focused school clubs, might also be adopted.
- Schools address the importance of friendships in PSHE, particularly with regard to the development of emotional and social competence of pupils. The process of making friends, and how to cope when friendships break down might be usefully included. In primary schools, emphasis on the importance of friendships could be integrated in the schools’ value base as a way of encouraging positive pupil relationships in a more informal way.
- The role of friendships in promoting the social and emotional competence of pupils should be included in the development of guidance and training materials for teachers.
Minimising Risks, Maximising Support

Strategies which seek to minimise the risks of ‘telling’ teachers about bullying, while also facilitating pupils’ access to adult support are likely to be well received by pupils of all ages. It is therefore recommended that:

- Urgent attention is given to making confidential sources of advice and support more widely available within school settings, and in local communities. This support could be provided in schools by independent youth organisations, or schools could form partnerships with external counselling organisations to provide confidential help and advice to pupils outside school hours.

A Whole School Approach

We suggest that listening to pupils about bullying should form part of an inclusive anti-bullying strategy, in which teachers also have their part to play. It is therefore recommended that:

- Listening to pupils forms part of a whole-school approach to tackling bullying that also involves taking action at various levels, including: the development of a positive school ethos; regular reviews of anti-bullying policies and strategies (including the relationship of bullying to racial and sexual harassment, and homophobic abuse); curriculum development; support and training for teachers; environmental design; and working in partnership with parents.

Research Sample and Methods

The views and experiences of pupils were investigated using both qualitative (focus group) and quantitative (questionnaire survey) methods. Twelve schools (six primary and six secondary) from different parts of the country took part in the research. In total, 230 pupils participated in the focus group stage of the research. 953 pupils participated in the questionnaire survey (a response rate of 78.5%). Of these, 82% were secondary school pupils in Year 8, and 18% were primary school pupils in Year 5.

The sample was ethnically mixed and gender balanced. The fieldwork was completed during the summer and winter terms of 2002. More detailed information on the study sample and research methods can be found in the full report.

References

Children and Young People’s Unit (2001)
Learning to Listen: Core principles for the Involvement of Children and Young People.
London: CYPU.

DFES (2000)
Bullying: Don’t Suffer in Silence.
London: DfEE www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/

Contacts

Copies of the full report (RR400) are available by writing to:
DFES publications,
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Copies of this summary (RB400) and the full report (RR400) can be accessed at:
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