

**Plymouth  
School of  
Creative Arts**

make  
discover  
perform

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Date created: 01/11/2012	Created by: M. Sweeney,	Review period: Annual
Reviewed: Oct 2017	By P & SW	Next Review Due: Oct 2018

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## Foreword

The Department for Education (DfE) has published advice on preventing and tackling bullying, which is for school leaders, staff and governing bodies. The document has been produced to help schools prevent and respond to bullying as part of their overall behaviour policy, to understand their legal responsibilities in this area, and to understand the DfE's approach.

The document replaces previous advice to schools. It outlines, in one place, the government's approach to bullying, legal obligations and the powers schools have to tackle bullying, and the principles that underpin the most effective anti-bullying strategies in schools. It also lists further resources through which school staff can access specialist information on the specific issues that they face.

The advice has been included as **Appendix 1** and the good practice it identifies has been included in this policy.

This policy on preventing bullying has regard to DfE Guidance *Preventing and tackling bullying* and DfE Guidance *Behaviour & Discipline in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff* (January 2016)

## The Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, new duties on schools and other public bodies came into force in April 2011. The Act strengthens and simplifies existing equality legislation. The Act brings together existing duties not to discriminate on grounds of race, disability and gender, with which schools are already bound to comply, and it extends these to include duties not to discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender reassignment. It places a requirement on governing bodies and proprietors of schools to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities, some of which they will already be doing. It will apply to school policies for tackling prejudice based bullying. PSCA staff and governors will take heed of the Act and ensure all types of bullying are recognised and acted upon.

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Plymouth School of Creative Arts (PSCA) is committed to building positive relationships and therefore preventing all forms of bullying. We will work hard to ensure that bullying plays no part in our school community by proactively dealing with all students, their families and staff to eradicate and promptly deal with all reported incidents.

1.2 Bullying is a form of antisocial behaviour that has no place in this community. Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time, which intentionally hurts or harms. This includes all forms of cyber-bullying. Bullying can produce feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others and undermine self-esteem. It can affect attitudes and performance in school. For some, it can lead to serious and prolonged distress and long term damage to social and emotional development.

1.3 PSCA intends to implement an anti-bullying policy that reflects the aims and policies of the following further recommendations and guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Information (England) Regulations 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (Amended) (England) Regulations 2014
- Education Act 2011
- Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012
- The School Behaviour (Determination and Publicising of Measures in Academies) Regulations 2012

1.4 PSCA always treats the issue of bullying as a serious matter.

## 2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to reduce the incidence rates of bullying and create an environment in which **everyone feels safe, secure and respected**.

2.2 At PSCA our aim is to prevent or deter bullying or harassment from starting and to deal with it if it does occur and to minimise the opportunity for recurrence. Wherever possible and appropriate, every effort should be made to resolve a situation on an informal basis. The procedure will also encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying.

2.3 A pupil who believes that they have been subject to harassment should, in the first instance, state that the behaviour is unwelcome, unwanted, unacceptable and/or offensive and ask the individual(s) concerned to stop.

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2.4 This policy and procedure provides the guidance and the process to follow in the instance of a harassment or bullying situation experienced by a pupil.

2.5 Accordingly, PSCA will do the following;

- Ensure that all students have a clear view of what a good behaviour in relationships look like
- Ensure that a clear, uniform approach to dealing with all forms of bullying is adopted and regularly monitored
- Ensure anti-bullying initiatives are an integral part of the citizenship/assembly programme for all years
- Facilitate the operational of peer mentors and other anti-bullying initiatives
- Provide advice to parents and students in our newsletter and student planner
- Ensure the anti-bullying message remains high profile via the student council, displays and notice boards
- Provide appropriate in service training for **all** staff
- Provide a physical environment that is closely supervised and where students feel safe and secure
- Enlist the help and active support of parents and outside agencies
- Listen to students and parents
- The Headteacher will report to governors during his termly HT reports highlighting the number of cases of bullying that have occurred.

### 3. Bullying defined

3.0.1 Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, frighten or make someone feel uncomfortable over a period of time, where it is difficult for the person being bullied to defend themselves. It is distinct from random acts of aggression.

3.0.2 Bullying can manifest itself in any of the following ways:

- Physical – e.g. assaulting a person or property, using racist or sexual gestures
- Verbal – e.g. name calling or teasing, using racist or sexually abusive comments
- Indirect/Emotional – damaging the reputation of the character of the victim, socially excluding them from games or conversation or tormenting them
- Cyber bullying – e.g. using technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else
- Bullying affects the ability of a student to fully participate in and enjoy PSCA life and it is both an equal opportunities issue as well as a disciplinary offence.

### 3.1 Bully

3.1.1 A bully is a person or group behaving in a way that might meet needs for status, material gain or group process and does not recognise or meet the needs and rights of the other people or person who is harmed by the behaviour.

### 3.2 Victim

3.1.2 A victim is a person or group that is harmed by the behaviour of others and who does not have the resources, status, skill or ability to counteract or stop the harmful behaviour.

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## 4. Possible signs of bullying

4.1 Both teachers and parents are in a position to observe changes in the behaviour of a child, which may indicate that they are being subjected to bullying.

4.2 The following is a list of signs to look out for;

- Damage to or losses of items of clothing, property, money or school work. If this occurs frequently, then start to ask questions
- Are there signs of physical injuries, e.g. cuts or bruises?
- Academic achievement is perceived to have changed in a negative way
- Playing truant or a reluctance to travel to and/or attend PSCA
- Being aware of children who register, but fail to go to lessons
- A loss of weight that may mean money for meals has been given away
- An unhappy child who may not wish to go out at breaks or lunchtimes
- A child who threatens to self-harm

4.3 Other behaviour patterns demonstrated by the victim, e.g. is the student conspicuously loud or quiet; is their behaviour appropriate when engaged in normal classroom interaction; is there unexplained behaviour changes e.g. moody, tearful, temper, frightened, reluctant to talk to or sit with friends?

## 5. Homophobic bullying

5.1 PSCA will take an active approach to tackle all kinds of bullying, including homophobic bullying, and will follow the guidance in the publication '**Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying Work in Schools - Preventing and Responding to Homophobic bullying in schools**'.

5.2 Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered (LGB&T) people and can be experienced by any one of the following;

- Young people who are, or who are thought to be, LGB&T
- Young people who are different in some way and who may not act like others
- Young people who have gay friends or family, or their parents or carers are LGB&T
- Teachers who may or may not be LGB&T

5.3 PSCA recognises that homophobic bullying looks like other bullying, but may include the following;

- Verbal abuse – including spreading rumours that someone is LGB&T
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault and threatening behaviour
- Cyber bullying – using online spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them (this can include text messaging, including picture and video messaging)

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5.4 Staff will also challenge casual homophobic language and will ensure anyone who makes persistent remarks is removed from the classroom and made to understand the consequences of their behaviour in terms of consequences.

5.5 PSCA will ensure staff and students can openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. We will also make it clear to students that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable.

5.6 Whenever necessary, PSCA will invest in specialised skills to help staff to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) pupils. We will also work with the wider community, such as the police and children's services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. We will work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside of school.

## 6. Cyber bullying and the internet

6.1 PSCA will follow the DfE guidance on preventing and dealing with cyber bullying, as summarised in the document '*Cyber bullying – A whole school community issue*'.

6.2 PSCA will also follow the latest guidance on safe internet usage and ensure all students are taught how to protect themselves when using the internet. Staff members will promote and develop a culture of confident technology users, to support innovation, e-safety and digital literacy skills.

6.3 To raise awareness of and tackle cyber bullying, staff will do the following;

- Ensure the whole PSCA community understands and talks about cyber bullying
- Ensure policies and practices, including acceptable use policies are shared with all staff, students and parents or carers
- Make reporting cyber bullying easier by providing and publicising different ways of reporting it
- Promote the positive use of technology, including e-safety and digital literacy
- Evaluate the impact of preventative initiatives by using surveys, for example, to collect feedback

## 7. Bullying by text message and mobile phones

7.1 At PSCA we will make sure that;

- Students will be warned about the need for care when giving out their mobile phone number
- A record will be kept of the date and time of any offensive messages
- Students will be encouraged to show the messages to a member of PSCA staff
- Students who report bullying by text message will be taken seriously
- The student's family may need to contact the police if the cyber bullying is serious and if a potential criminal offence has been committed
- If such bullying is carried out on a persistent basis or if there is a threat of violence, it will be treated as any other serious bullying incident
- Malicious emails will be dealt with in the same manner

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- Students who take photographs or videos on their phones with malicious intent will be dealt with in the same manner

## 8. Bullying prevention strategies

### 8.1 Staff charter

8.1.1 Staff will not misuse a position of power to dominate the students in PSCA.

8.1.2 We will avoid the following;

- Sarcastic comments
- Derogatory nicknames
- Dominating and humiliating behaviour

8.1.3 We will listen to students when they are willing to talk about bullying. We will be sensitive to a student's need for privacy and respect, encouraging the ethos of 'it is safe to tell'.

8.1.4 The supervision and day to day organisation of the school will make sure that the playgrounds, corridors, toilets and other hidden areas are regularly visited by duty staff. The new building will be designed in a way that minimises areas in which bullying could take place.

8.1.5 Staff will support the Behaviour Policy.

### 8.2 Student charter

8.2.1 Students will recognise each other's rights to the following;

- To be physically safe
- To keep own possessions and money
- To be free of insult, derogatory terms and teasing
- To be able to associate with other young people for companionship and friendship

8.2.2 The culture of PSCA will encourage students to ensure the following;

- The physical safety of others
- The security of everyone's personal possessions and money
- The freedom from hurt by name-calling, teasing and the inclusion of all students in play and learning activities

### 8.3 Peer support

8.3.1 Peer support includes students from all years to act as mentors to each other.

## 9. The curriculum

9.1 The topic of bullying will be focused on in-form time and school assemblies. These times will also be used to ensure all students are aware of the actions to take and reporting procedures if they are being bullied, know of someone within the school that is being bullied or witness someone being bullied.

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9.2 This will be reinforced during the citizenship lessons where there will be a focus on dealing with the subject of bullying in a variety of different ways. These sessions will also be vitally important in teaching students some of the skills necessary to avoid and resist bullying behaviour such as reasoning and the ability to open dialogue and build cooperative relationships with others.

9.3 Bullying will also be explored as a cross-curricular theme in subjects such as English Literature and History. The issue of bullying will be investigated in a variety of ways, e.g.: group discussions, written work, role-play.

### **Bullying must never be kept a secret**

## **10. Dealing with bullying - Responsibilities and Actions Overview**

10.1 **Responsibilities include** – It is the duty of every member of the school to take responsibility for their behaviour and modify it if necessary, as harassment or bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances. In the event of a failure to do so, disciplinary action may be a consequence. All members of the school community must take appropriate action to ensure that harassment and bullying does not occur in their environment. In some cases, until it has been brought to their attention, the bully/harasser(s) may be unaware, or claim to be unaware, that their behaviour is perceived as inappropriate or offensive. It may occasionally happen that words or actions have been genuinely misconstrued.

10.2 The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with promptly by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the teacher, Phase Leader or Behaviour Lead
- The teacher/Phase Leader/Behaviour Lead will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- The headteacher will be kept informed and if it persists he/she will advise the appropriate subject teachers
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation will all parties concerned

10.3 Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by offering a prompt opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff. The main focus will be reassuring the pupil and parents and offering continuous support, thus restoring self-esteem and confidence.

10.4 Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, registration time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

10.5 At PSCA we will also involve pupils and parents as much as we can including;

We will:

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- Regularly canvas children and young people’s views on the extent and nature of bullying
- Ensure pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied
- Work with pupils who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have
- Ensure that parents / carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying
- Ensure parents know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively
- Ensure parents / carers know where to access independent advice about bullying
- Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying

10.6 Action which cannot be resolved on an informal basis, which is serious, or which continues following a request to stop, will be subject to investigation. A formal investigation will also be conducted where a complaint or observation is made by a person or persons other than the individual being bullied or harassed.

## 11. Procedure to support a student who has been bullied

11.1 The following is the procedure that should be followed to support a student who has been bullied;

- Talk to the student away from other students, but with other staff close by
- Listen to the student’s account of the incident
- Reassure the student that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do
- Make it clear to the student that they are not to blame for what has happened
- Ideally, allow the student to write a statement or make a note of what the student said
- Explain that the student should report any further incidents to a learning or personal coach, or to another member of staff immediately

11.2 Ask the student for the following information;

- What has happened
- Whether or not this was the first incident; if not, how many other incidents have there been
- Who was involved
- Where did it happened
- Who saw what happened (staff as well as students)
- What the student has already done about it
- Depending on the severity of the incident, whether parents or carers ought to be contacted

11.3 Ideally, the student should be given the time and appropriate accommodation to say what has happened and for this to be recorded by the student themselves or an adult if this is helpful. This is jointly checked by the student and staff member, and where necessary, amended to ensure clarity. This information must be passed on as soon as possible to a member of the SLT or SENCO and copied

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to the Studio teacher or Tutor. It is usual to remove the accused bully and any witnesses from the site of the bullying as soon as possible in order for them to write statements on their own about the incident.

11.4 Staff members who witnessed the incident should be asked to write down the relevant details as soon as possible and give these to the staff member investigating.

11.5 The victim should be consulted regarding their return to learning activity and, where possible, their views heeded.

## 12 Supporting students

### 12.1 Students who have been bullied

12.1.1 It is likely that personal coaches will work with these students, but it is essential that the students are fully supported during this traumatic time, through appropriate contact with staff and with students. Ultimately, the student must make the decision regarding to whom they would like to speak. Students will have access to a member of the Strategic Leadership Team if they request this, or if it is felt they should be referred. The Headteacher / SLT member / SENCO and Form Tutor will work with the student and their parents or carers to decide what level of support is needed.

12.1.2 The student's own peers could have an important role in acting as counsellor or mediator. This will be an additional strategy available to support the student, if deemed appropriate.

### 12.2 Students who have bullied

12.2.1 It is also important for the bully to receive counselling and monitoring, to prevent further incidents. Often, bullies themselves have previously been victims. Usually, the Tutor with the support of the Mental Health lead and SENCO will carry out this role and talk to the student about how things are going, their progress and friends.

12.2.2 Staff will do the following;

- Ask for what reason they acted as they did
- Explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy
- Discuss with the student how to join in with others without bullying
- Give the student lots of praise and encouragement for the times when they are being kind and considerate to others
- Inform and involve parents or carers, when appropriate
- If appropriate, there could be a meeting between the victim and the bully to enable the bully to apologise or explain their actions, i.e. as part of a process of restorative justice

## 13 Reporting and recording incidents

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13.1 Bearing in mind the seriousness of bullying incidents, it is imperative that all the following happens with all incidents;

- They are promptly dealt with
- They are verbally reported (to the Headteacher), well before the end of the day
- They are recorded using the school's Management Information System (Progresso) and may also be reported as a Safeguarding concern (using MyConcern) where appropriate
- The Headteacher reports the number of incidents to governors on a termly basis

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## **DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION ADVICE: PREVENTING AND TACKLING BULLYING ADVICE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS, STAFF AND GOVERNING BODIES**

### *About this advice*

This document has been produced to help schools prevent and respond to bullying as part of their overall behaviour policy, to understand their legal responsibilities in this area and to understand the Department's approach.

### *Who is this advice for?*

This advice is primarily aimed at school staff, school leaders and governors in schools, 6th forms and colleges including Academies, Free schools, Pupil Referral Units and alternative providers.

It may also be useful for FE and community settings.

### *What has changed?*

This document replaces previous advice to schools. It outlines, in one place, the government's approach to bullying, legal obligations and the powers schools have to tackle bullying, and the principles that underpin the most effective anti-bullying strategies in schools. It also lists further resources through which school staff can access specialist information on the specific issues that they face.

### *What does the law say and what do I have to do?*

#### **The Education and Inspections Act 2006**

There are a number of statutory obligations on schools with regard to behaviour, which establish clear responsibilities to respond to bullying. In particular, Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 does the following

- Provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy, which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents
- Gives Head Teacher teachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff

#### **The Equality Act 2010**

Under the Equality Act 2010, new duties on schools and other public bodies will come into force in April 2011. The Act strengthens and simplifies existing equality legislation. The Act brings together existing duties not to discriminate on grounds of race, disability and gender, with which schools are already bound to comply, and it extends these to include duties not to discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender reassignment. It places a requirement on governing bodies and proprietors of schools to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities, some of which they will already be doing. It will apply to school policies for tackling prejudice-based bullying.

#### **Safeguarding children and young people**

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to

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suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff members should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue that has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

### **Criminal law**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

### **Bullying outside school premises**

Head Teacher teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Head Teacher teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Head Teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

### **Dealing with bullying**

Bullying can be physical or emotional and it can take many forms (eg cyberbullying). Immediate physical safety and stopping violence come first, but bullying can also be because of prejudice against particular groups (eg because of special educational needs, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or transgender status, or because of caring duties).

School staff, leaders and governors are best placed to decide how best to respond to the particular issues that affect their pupils. There is no single solution to bullying which will suit all schools.

Successful schools have clear policies in place to deal with bullying and poor behaviour, which are clear to parents, pupils and staff so that, when incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly.

Schools should apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for

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the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying behaviour may need support themselves.

Schools that excel at tackling bullying have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment – in the playground, corridors, classrooms and beyond the school gates. Staff and older pupils setting an excellent example to others reinforce the knowledge and values that children are taught in lessons. Schools that achieve this are successful in preventing bullying from arising in the first place.

Successful schools also do the following

- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home
- Involve pupils. All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders
- Regularly evaluate and update their approach to take account of developments in technology; for instance, by updating acceptable-use policies for computers
- Implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Schools can also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable
- Use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems. Schools can draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying
- Provide effective staff training. Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all members of school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems and where to seek support. Schools can invest in specialised skills to help their staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) pupils
- Work with the wider community, such as the police and children's services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. Successful schools also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school
- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school, including cyberbullying

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- Create an inclusive environment. Schools should create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination
- Celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue

*School's accountability*

Pupils will learn best in a safe and calm environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus.

**In January 2012, the new Ofsted framework came into force and includes 'behaviour and safety' as one of its key criteria for inspections. Schools should be able to demonstrate the impact of anti-bullying policies.**

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