



PATRON  
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**LVS** Hassocks

A unique, positive education for young people  
on the autism spectrum

## **ANTI-BULLYING & CYBER-BULLYING POLICY**

Policy Written: 4 November 2016

Date Reviewed: 15 July 2020

Reviewer: Jen Weeks

Next Review: 1 September 2022

Review Cycle: Every two years

Date ratified: March 2018

## **School Statement on Bullying**

LVS Hassocks is a place where every person has the right to be themselves and to be included in a safe and happy environment. Everyone at our school is equal and should be treated with respect.

### **Aims of the Policy**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at LVS Hassocks. At LVS Hassocks the safety, welfare and well-being of all students and staff is a key priority. We take all incidences of bullying seriously and it is our duty as a whole school community to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment or discrimination.

We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community. We want to enable our students to become responsible citizens and to prepare them for life in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Britain. These values reflect those that will be expected of our students by society when they leave school and enter the world of work or further study.

We are committed to improving our school's approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring, reviewing and assessing the impact of our preventative measures.

### **What is the Legal Framework for the Policy?**

The Licensed Trade Charity is committed to complying with all relevant anti bullying legislation, in particular:

- Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Education and Inspection Act 2006
- School Teachers Pay and Condition
- DCSF Bullying - A Charter for Action
- Healthy Schools Anti-Bullying – a guidance for schools
- Preventing & Tackling Bullying – advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies, June 2013.

### **What other documents relate to the Anti-Bullying Policy?**

- Wellbeing Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Autism Support Strategies Document
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour data
- Record of Complaints
- Staff Handbook

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms. For the purpose of this document we are using the Anti-Bullying Alliance definition:

*'The intention of hurting one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It is usually repetitive or persistent, although some one-off attacks can have continuing harmful effect on the victim.'*

Bullying can cause both emotional and physical harm to people and in some cases life-long mental health and self-esteem problems. Research suggests that 24-50% of primary aged children are being bullied and 10-28% of secondary aged children (Oliver and Candappa, 2003).

The nature of bullying can be:

- **Physical** – such as hitting or physically intimidating someone, or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact towards someone
- **Attacking property** – such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions
- **Verbal** – such as name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone
- **Psychological** – such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people
- **Cyber** – such as text, email or other social media to write or say hurtful things about someone.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- **Race** – racist bullying
- **Religion or belief**
- **Culture or class**
- **Gender** – sexist bullying
- **Sexual orientation** – homophobic or biphobic bullying
- **Gender identity** – transphobic bullying
- **SEN or disability**
- **Appearance or health conditions**
- **Related to home or other personal situation**
- **Related to another vulnerable group of young people**

These actions can take place face-to-face, via third parties or via other means such as text messages and emails. Cyber bullying can invade home/personal space and can involve larger numbers of people. It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted. Cyber bullying includes: threats, intimidation, harassment, 'cyber stalking', vilification/defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images ('happy-slapping') and manipulation.

Sometimes the behaviour of the students at LVS Hassocks may appear to be bullying in nature, due to the students' difficulties in communication, socialisation and imagination. Students will find it difficult to socialise appropriately with others and may have problems communicating with peers, sometimes making comments which sound nasty but in their head are merely stating the obvious. All staff need to be aware of students' difficulties when dealing with allegations/observations of bullying.

### **Signs and symptoms of bullying**

Possible warning signs that a young person is being bullied:

- Has torn, damaged or missing pieces of clothing, books, or other belongings
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises and scratches
- Has few, if any friends, with whom he or she spends time – however staff need to be aware that some students with autism prefer to be on their own due to their social interaction challenges

- Seems afraid of going to school, walking around school, or taking part in organised activities with peers (such as clubs)
- Takes a long, 'illogical' route when walking around school
- Has lost interest in school work or suddenly begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, tearful or depressed when he or she comes home
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches or other physical ailments
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams
- Experiences a loss of appetite; or
- Appears anxious and suffers from low self-esteem.

### **The Responsibility of the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher is required by law to:

- Annually review the school's Wellbeing Policy
- Determine and publish detailed measures on rules, rewards sanctions and behaviour management strategies
- Ensure that these detailed measures encourage 'good behaviour' and help prevent all forms of bullying among students
- Ensure the maintenance of good order and discipline of students at all times during the school day
- Provide good systems for communication between staff, students and parents in relation to the school policy on promoting good behaviour
- As is reasonable, regulate the behaviour of students when they are off-site (in particular relating to cyber bullying).

The Head Teacher will:

- Identify specialist lead practitioners to support this work
- Maintain a dialogue with the Chief Executive and Trustees in order to meet the legal and school inspection requirements
- Record, monitor and analyse information relating to bullying
- Coordinate anti bullying curriculum opportunities, including involving students in e-safety and responses to cyber bullying (see **Appendix 4** for useful resources)
- Ensure that students receive on-going education about e-safety and cyber bullying through a variety of means including assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week, projects, e-safety meetings with staff and students.
- Define bullying in the context of the following dimensions:
  - Physical
  - Social
  - Verbal
  - Cyber
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify and tackle all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- Provide systems of support for bullied students
- Organise an effective complaints procedure which is readily available to parents and students
- Organise communication with other schools which have an effective anti-bullying policy
- Organise training to develop skills for wellbeing
- Organise training to identify vulnerable children, different forms of bullying, staff responsibilities and methods of recording observations of bullying
- Provide regular information to parents about anti-bullying, e-safety and cyber bullying

## **Reporting bullying**

### **Students who are being bullied**

If a learner is being bullied they are encouraged to not retaliate but to tell someone they trust about it such as a friend, family member or trusted adult. They are also encouraged to report any bullying incidents in school:

- **Report to a teacher** – such as class teacher, key worker or another trusted member of staff
- **Report using the anonymous school bullying reporting box at the bottom of the stairs to therapy**
- **Call Childline to speak with someone in confidence on 0800 1111**
- **Use the Time2Talk facility**

### **Staff Tasks**

#### **All staff**

- Must follow school policy and have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in the schools' efforts to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the students involved and inform a relevant member of the SLT
- Must promote the general wellbeing and progress of individual students
- Must apply the school's rewards and sanctions legally
- May use physical intervention in certain circumstances.

#### **Training will take the form of:**

- Induction in the first week of employment
- Specific weeks focused on anti-bullying procedures
- A termly review of behaviour data to identify patterns of behaviour

#### **Who should complete the training?**

All staff will complete the training and will:

- Complete the induction programme
- Sign to confirm that they have read and will follow the Anti-Bullying policy.

#### **What skills will staff have to use in response to bullying?**

All staff will have a comprehensive understanding of the schools Anti-Bullying Policy, allied to:

- The ability to develop best practice, based upon what is confirmed as working
- A clear understanding of their legal and professional responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying
- An awareness of the need for celebrating students' successes and to communicate these to parents and carers
- An ability to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- The skills to promote individuals' wellbeing
- The skills to respond appropriately to students' and parents' complaints
- Recognition of non-verbal signs and indicators of cyber bullying

- The reporting process for cyber bullying both internally and through external channels (see Appendices 1, 2 & 3).

### **What needs to be done in the building and grounds to address bullying?**

You will be able to see:

- Classroom displays concerning issues relating to bullying
- Provision of special safe places throughout the buildings and grounds
- Rules of appropriate behaviour clearly displayed
- Student code of conduct

### **How does the curriculum reflect the Anti-Bullying Policy?**

Throughout the curriculum there will be:

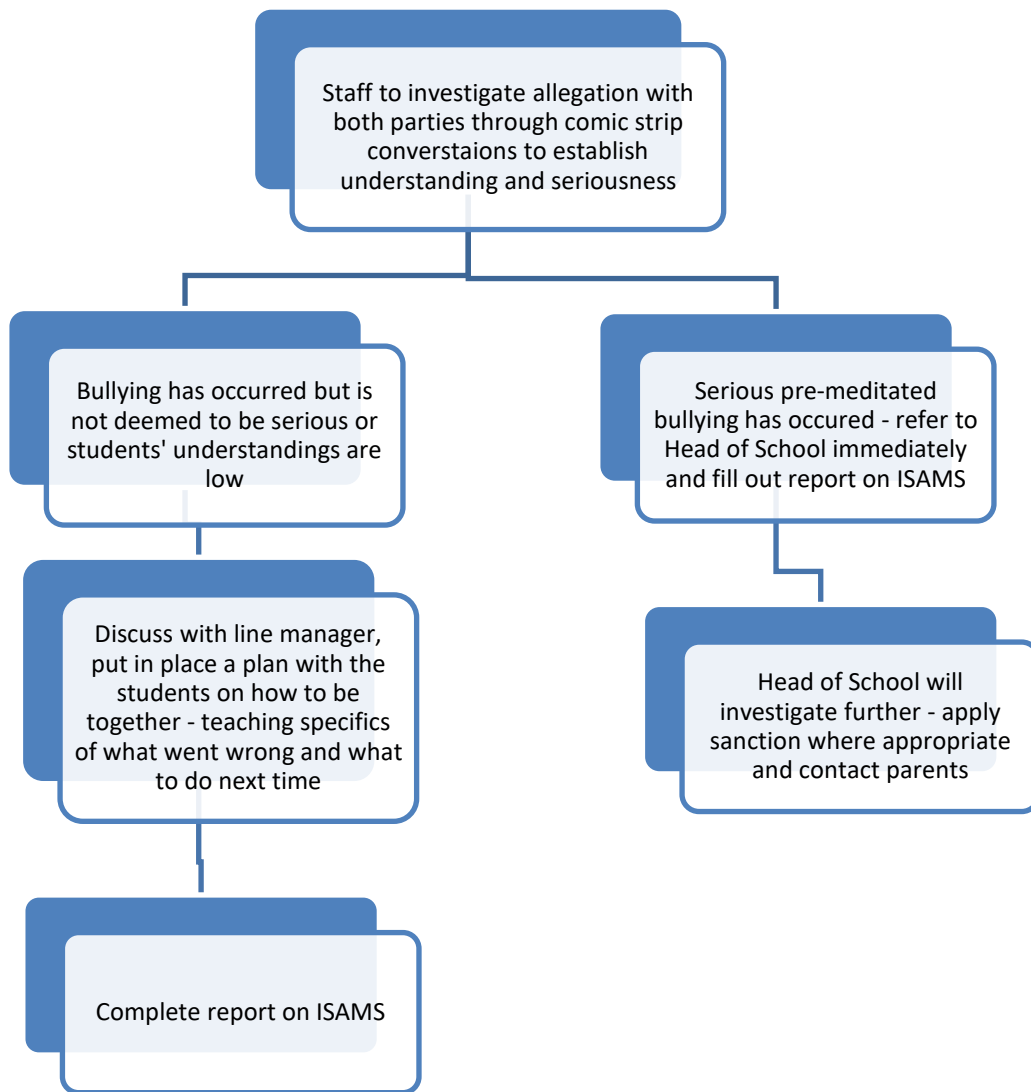
- Work programmes that reflect the desire for personal wellbeing
- Opportunities to address bullying as a whole school issue
- Encouragement of peer group rejection of bullying
- PSHE programme of study that includes opportunities for students to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond to and prevent bullying
- Whole school and age group assemblies that help raise students' awareness of bullying and derogatory language
- Whole school participation in events including Anti-Bullying week, Black History Month and LGBTQ+ History Month
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and students across the school
- The schools values of equality and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible
- Students are continually involved in developing school-wide anti-bullying initiatives through consultation with groups such as the school council and through an anti-bullying survey.

### **Anti-Bullying Procedure**

Owing to the difficulties experienced by students at LVS Hassocks, it is necessary to ensure that teaching about bullying is specific. It is possible, owing to students' difficulties, that their behaviours appear to others to be bullying, but in fact are a product of not understanding social rules. It also needs to be noted that this doesn't mean they are not capable of bullying; our students need to learn that just because they don't understand a social rule, or have problems socially, it is still not acceptable to bully, whether this is intentional or not.

The following chart outlines the procedure which applies when there is an allegation or observation of bullying.

**Appendix 1** details the procedure to follow when responding to incidences of cyber bullying.



## Appendix 1

### Responding to Cyber Bullying

Most cases of cyber bullying will be dealt with through the procedure outlined above. However, some features of cyber bullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:

- **impact:** the scale and scope of cyber bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying
- **targets and perpetrators:** the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets
- **location:** the 24/7 and anywhere nature of cyber bullying
- **anonymity:** the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them
- **motivation:** some students may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- **evidence:** unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence, although with some applications this may be time limited
- it is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and these responses apply to them too.

### Support for the person being bullied

- Offer emotional support; reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling
- Advise the person not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to their parent or a member of staff
- Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain
- Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change e.g. mobile phone number
- If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. Alternatively, contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down.
- In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services. **Appendix 2** contains information on what service providers can do and how to contact them.

### Investigation

- Members of staff should contact the DSL and Director of Special Needs in all cases
- Staff and students should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse; save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screenshot of social network pages, print, save and forward to staff whole email messages
- If images are involved, determine whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. If so, contact: the local police or CEOP (<http://www.ceop.gov.uk/>)
- Identify the bully. See **Appendix 3** for guidance
- Any allegations against staff should be handled as other allegations following guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.
- Confiscate mobile phone if appropriate
- Contact the police in cases of actual/suspected illegal content



## **Working with the bully and applying sanctions**

The aim of the sanctions will be:

- to help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop
- to hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour
- to demonstrate to the school community that cyber bullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly
- Sanctions for any breaches of AUPs or internet/mobile phone agreements will be applied
- In applying sanctions, consideration must be given to type and impact of bullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation
- The outcome must include helping the bully to recognise the consequence of their actions and providing support to enable the attitude and behaviour of the bully to change
- Each of the LVS schools will follow its own disciplinary procedures and its own Anti-Bullying Policy
- A key part of the sanction may well involve ensuring that the student deletes files.

## **Evaluating the effectiveness of prevention measures**

- Identify areas for improvement and incorporate children's ideas
- It is desirable to conduct an annual evaluation including a review of recorded cyber bullying incidents, a survey of student and staff experiences and a parent satisfaction survey
- It is also desirable to publicise evaluation findings; celebrate what works and what improvements are planned.

## **Legal duties and powers**

- The school has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment
- School staff may request a student to reveal a message or other phone content and may confiscate a phone;
- If they consider that a mobile phone may contain evidence of bullying or a crime or the potential of a crime they may investigate the specific contents relating to that act.
- Some cyber bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws including Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

## APPENDIX 2

### When and how to contact the service provider

#### Mobile Phones

All UK mobile operators have nuisance call centres set up and/or procedures in place to deal with such instances. The responses may vary, but possibilities for the operator include changing the mobile number of the person being bullied so that the bully will not be able to continue to contact them without finding out their new number. It is not always possible for operators to bar particular numbers from contacting the phone of the person being bullied, although some phone handsets themselves do have this capability. Action can be taken against the bully's phone account (e.g. blocking their account), only with police involvement. An internet search for the relevant mobile operator will provide their customer services contact details.

#### Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat)

It is normally possible to block/ignore particular users on social networking sites, which should mean the user can stop receiving unwanted comments. Users can do this from within the site.

Many social network providers also enable users to pre-moderate any comments left on their profile before they are visible by others. This can help a user prevent unwanted or hurtful comments appearing on their profile for all to see. The user can also set their profile to public for all to see. The user can also set their profile to "Private", so that only those authorised by the user are able to access and see their profile.

It is good practice for social network providers to make reporting incidents of cyber bullying easy, and thus have clear, accessible and prominent reporting features. Many of these reporting features will be within the profiles themselves, so they are 'handy' for the user. If social networking sites do receive reports about cyber bullying, they will investigate and can remove content that is illegal or breaks their terms and conditions in other ways. They may issue conduct warnings and they can delete the accounts of those that have broken these rules. It is also good practice for social network providers to make clear to the users what the terms and conditions are for using the service, outlining what is inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, as well as providing prominent safety information so that users know how to use the service safely and responsibly.

#### Contacts for some social network providers

- **Facebook:** reports can be made by clicking on the [...] button at the top of the post and then clicking on the 'Report' button.  
**Instagram:** reports can be made by clicking on the [...] button to the right of the Like and Comment buttons at the top of every picture. Users can report any inappropriate picture posted by someone else by selecting the [...] button and then clicking on 'Report this Post'.  
**Snapchat:** To report a story or snap, hold the picture/story until a flag appears at the bottom left of the screen. Tap it, and then select the relevant option. To report a Snapchat account, press and hold the Snapchatter's name, tap and select 'report'

#### Instant Messenger (IM)

It is possible to block users, or change Instant Messenger IDs so the bully is not able to contact their target any more. Most providers will have information on their website about how to do this. In addition, the Instant Messenger provider can investigate and shut down any accounts that have been misused and

clearly break their terms of service. The best evidence for the service provider is archived or recorded conversations and most IM providers allow the user to record all messages.

It is also good practice for Instant Messenger providers to have visible and easy-to-access reporting features on their service.

### **Contacts of some IM providers**

- **MSN:** when in Windows Live Messenger, clicking the 'Help' tab will bring up a range of options, including 'Report Abuse' and there is also an online feedback form at <http://support.msn.com/default.aspx?mkt=en-gb> to report on a range of products including MSN Messenger.
- **Yahoo!:** when in Yahoo! Messenger, clicking the 'Help' tab will bring up a range of options, including 'Report Abuse'.

### **Email providers (e.g. hotmail and Gmail)**

It is possible to block particular senders and if the bullying persists an alternative is for the person being bullied to change their email addresses. The email provider will have information on their website and how to create a new account.

### **Contacts of some email providers**

- **Hotmail:** there is an online contact form at <http://support.msn.com/default.aspx?mkt=en-gb>.
- **Gmail:** there is an online contact form at [https://services.google.com/inquiry/gmail\\_security4](https://services.google.com/inquiry/gmail_security4).
- **Yahoo! Mail:** there is a 'Help' link available to users when logged in, which contains a reporting form.

### **Video-hosting sites**

It is possible to get content taken down from video-hosting sites, though the content will need to be illegal or have broken the terms of service of the site in other ways. On YouTube, perhaps the most well-known of such sites, it is possible to report content to the site provider as inappropriate. In order to do this, you will need to create an account (this is free) and log in, and then you will have the option to 'flag content as inappropriate'. The option to flag the content is under the video content itself.

YouTube provides information on what is considered inappropriate in its terms of service see [www.youtube.com/t/termssection5c](http://www.youtube.com/t/termssection5c).

### **Chat rooms, individual website owners/forums, message board hosts**

Most chat rooms should offer the user the option of blocking or ignoring particular users. Some services may be moderated, and then moderators will warn users posting abusive comments or take down content that breaks their terms of use.

## APPENDIX 3

### Identifying the Bully

Although the technology seemingly allows anonymity, there are ways to find out information about where bullying originated. However, it is important to be aware that this may not necessarily lead to an identifiable individual. For instance, if another person's phone or school network account has been used, locating where the information was originally sent from will not, by itself, determine who the bully is. There have been cases of people using another individuals' phone or hacking into their IM or school email account to send nasty messages.

In cases where you do not know the identity of the bully, some key questions to look at:

- Was the bullying carried out on the school system? If yes, are there logs in school to see who it was? Contact the school IT helpdesk to see if this is possible
- Are there identifiable witnesses that can be interviewed? There may be children who have visited the offending site and left comments, for example.
- If the bullying was not carried out on the school system, was it carried out on a mobile or a particular internet service (e.g. IM or social networking site)? As discussed, the service provider, when contacted, may be able to take some steps to stop the abuse by blocking the aggressor or removing content it considers defamatory or breaks their terms of service. However, the police will need to be involved to enable them to look into the data of another user.
- If the bullying was via mobile phone, has the bully withheld their number? If so, it is important to record the date and time of the message and contact the mobile operator. Steps can be taken to trace the call, but the mobile operator can only disclose this information to the police, so police would need to be involved. If the number is not withheld, it may be possible for the school to identify the caller. For example, another student may be able to identify the number or the school may already keep records of the mobile phone numbers of their students. Content shared through a local wireless connection on mobile phones does not pass through the service providers' network and is much harder to trace. Similarly text messages sent from a website to a phone also provide difficulties for tracing for the internet service or mobile operator.
- Has a potential criminal offence been committed? If so, the police may have a duty to investigate. Police can issue a RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000) request to a service provider, enabling them to disclose the data about a message or the person sending a message. This may help identify the bully. Relevant criminal offences here include harassment and stalking, threats of harm or violence to a person or property, any evidence of sexual exploitation (for example grooming or inappropriate sexual contact of behaviour). A new national agency called the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) was set up in 2006 to deal with child sexual exploitation, and it is possible to report directly to them online at [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk) However, it is important to note that it is the sexual exploitation of children and young people, not cyberbullying, which forms the remit of CEOP.

### Information about cyber bullying and civil and criminal laws

It is very important for schools to take cyber bullying seriously. It can be a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence. Although bullying or cyber bullying is not a specific offence in UK law, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment, for example, or threatening behaviour, or indeed – particularly for cyber bullying – threatening and menacing communications.

## APPENDIX 4

### Some Useful Agencies/Resources

Websites and resources that offer support guidance and strategies for children, young people, schools and parents/carers to prevent all forms of bullying:

#### **Anti-Bullying Alliance**

This site offers information advice and resources on anti-bullying. It is intended to be a one stop shop where teachers can download assembly materials, lesson ideas and information including those for Anti-Bullying Week. The site brings information, advice and resources together from more than 65 of its members, which include charities Childline, Kidscape, Mencap and the Association of Teachers & Lecturers (ATL). It has a site called Hometown for children and young people about dealing with all forms of bullying [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

#### **Anti-Bullying Questionnaire**

Anti-Bullying Questionnaire that schools can download and use to find out about the prevalence of bullying. Go to the web page above and click on Questionnaire.

#### **Anti Bullying Network**

An excellent Scottish Anti-Bullying site based at the University of Edinburgh dedicated to promoting a positive school ethos. It has advice for students, teachers, parents, on all aspects of bullying, including homophobic, racist and cyber and good case examples of schools in the region that have tried out various strategies to reduce bullying, organised under specific headings. Schools may find these useful for ideas and to adapt. <http://www.antibullying.net>

#### **Bullying.co.uk**

Provides resources for schools, parents and the workplace, and has a good section on cyber bullying. [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

#### **BBC Schools**

This provides links and resources explaining how to stop bullying. It also signposts examples of successful school anti-bullying projects and ideas. [www.bbc.co.uk/schools](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools)

#### **CEOP: (Child exploitation online protection)**

A government agency that is dedicated to promoting online safety for children who may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation in chat rooms. It works with a number of charities and police across the UK and has a website for students of all ages called 'thinkuknow'. <http://www.ceop.gov.uk/>. [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) gives information on on-line safety

#### **ChildLine**

This provides a 24 hour helpline for children and young people being bullied in the UK. Children and young people can call 0800 1111 to talk about any problem. It is a major charity that is now housed with NSPCC. It provides training in peer support for students and schools and has a range of publications and downloadable resources for children, parents and teachers. <http://www.childline.org.uk>.

#### **Childnet International**

This is a charity that aims to make the internet a safer place for children and is dedicated to internet safety. It is concerned to prevent abuse on the internet and cyber bullying. It has advice for children and

parents and has some useful resources for teachers of ICT at key Stage 3 on internet safety. It is located in South London (Brockley). [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

### **Kidscape**

Kidscape is committed to keeping children safe from abuse. It is the first charity in the UK established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse it provides information, good resources and training for children and young people under the age of 16, their parents/carers. It offers a range of courses for professionals. It also provides courses in assertiveness training, ZAP, for children and young people and develops their confidence and skills to resist bullying and forms of abuse.

<http://www.kidscape.org.uk>

### **NSPCC**

The NSPCC works tirelessly and promotes public campaigns to stop cruelty to children. There is advice on a number of issues related to bullying, child protection, and abuse. Kids Zone which contains details for their child protection helpline for young people who have problems at home or are being bullied.

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk>.