The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools

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Executive summary and main recommendations

This report on the effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions started in September 2008 and lasted until November 2010. It was conducted by the Unit for School and Family Studies, based at Goldsmiths, University of London, with support from the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

To help schools and anti-bullying practitioners navigate the findings, the executive summary and main recommendations have been separated from the main report and used to provide an overview of the project with references in the text to the full report should the reader want more detailed information.

Section1: Aims, objectives and methodology

1.1: Aims (Full Report, p. 4, Section 1.1)

The project aimed to examine which strategies schools in England use to deal with episodes of bullying, and which are supported by local authorities, why schools choose these strategies, how choice of strategy varies by sector and type of bullying; to evaluate the effectiveness of a range of strategies, from the perspective of the anti-bullying lead, pupils and other school personnel; and to make a final report and recommendations to Department for Education (DfE). A further aim was to provide some evaluation of the peer mentoring pilot scheme commissioned by the former Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

1.2: Objectives (Full Report, pp. 4-5, Section 1.2)

The objectives of the project were to examine the use and success of a wide range of bullying strategies, and to focus in more detail on those strategies that can be used to deal directly with an incident of bullying. A range of important longer-term proactive strategies provides a backdrop to the use and effectiveness of immediate reactive strategies

1.3: Methodology (Full Report, pp. 5-10, Section 1.3)

The project had two main research elements:

- A national survey of schools and local authorities in England. These provide baseline data about proactive, peer support and reactive strategies.

    In total, 1378 school questionnaires were obtained (888 primary; 387 secondary; 82 special and 21 PRU), together with 527 follow-up school questionnaires (324 primary; 167 secondary; 28 special and eight PRU). These were completed by school staff.

In total, 47 local authority questionnaires were completed by the anti-bullying lead.

- Individual case studies of selected schools. Altogether 36 case study schools were selected from schools responding to the national survey - 17 primary (including one infant); 16 secondary; one special school; and two PRUs. These included 12 schools from the former DCSF peer mentoring pilot scheme. Schools were selected from the nine regions of England as defined by the Anti-Bullying Alliance. They ranged from rural to inner city schools, some in wealthy areas and comfortable suburbs, but a third in areas of significant deprivation and unemployment.

  In-depth interviews were held with management, anti-bullying staff, and pupils (peer supporters, other students, and students involved in bullying incidents). Follow-up interviews were held nine months later.

  In addition 285 bullying incident records were collated (nature of incident, strategy used, and outcome). Of these, 177 were provided by staff in 27 schools; 108 were from interviews with students involved in bullying incidents.

In presenting the results, three main approaches were distinguished: proactive strategies; peer support strategies; and reactive strategies. Data is reported on usage, and ratings of effectiveness (by schools, and local authorities). Ratings are on a 1-5 scale (1=very negative, 2=negative, 3=no effect, 4=positive, 5=very positive). The effectiveness of each strategy was expressed as a mean rating (e.g. 4.26). Information is from all four sectors, but if the data was from fewer than twenty five schools, it is omitted from the figures.

Section 2: Proactive strategies (Full Report, pp.11-34, Section 2; Proactive strategies summary pp. 30-34)

These are designed to prevent bullying happening. Schools provided ratings of effectiveness for the following strategies but unlike reactive strategies which are used to respond to bullying and either stop the bullying or do not; proactive strategies contribute to an anti-bullying school climate and ethos, which is more difficult to measure.

Proactive strategies were divided into whole-school approaches; classroom strategies; and playground strategies.

2.1: General findings (Full Report, pp.11-13, Section 2.1)

There was a difference between school use and local authority recommendations of a range of proactive strategies, notably in making improvements to the school environment and grounds. In general ratings of effectiveness for proactive strategies are very similar. However PSHEE, assemblies, and improving school environment, were rated more effective by schools and the National Healthy School Programme and training lunchtime supervisors were rated as more effective by the local authorities.

2.2: Whole-school approaches to tackling and preventing bullying in schools involve working with children and young people, parents, school staff and the whole-school community to provide a solid foundation from which to embed developments and improvement in a systematic way. (Full Report, pp.14-15, Section 2.2)

A range of whole-school approaches were widely used (81%-99% of schools), and were mostly seen as moderately effective (range 3.93-4.38).

2.2.1: National Healthy School Programme was widely used, helpful but lowest effectiveness rating in this section. (Full Report, p.16, Section 2.2.1)

2.2.2: Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE)/Citizenship was used by almost all schools, seen as helpful. (Full Report, pp.16-17, Section 2.2.2)

2.2.3: Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) was used in most primary schools, with high ratings; less used in secondary. (Full Report, p.17, Section 2.2.3)

2.2.4: Improving the school environment was used by four-fifths of schools, seen as helpful especially in special schools. (Full Report, pp.17-18, Section 2.2.4)

2.2.5: Assemblies was used by almost all schools, seen as consistent method of whole-school communication. (Full Report, p.18, Section 2.2.5)

2.2.6: School council was used by almost all schools (except PRUs), seen as challenging but good opportunity to hear student views. (Full Report, pp.18-19, Section 2.2.6)

2.2.7: Systems that support parent/carer involvement were quite widely used, with wide variation in practice, seen as important for communication, and support of bullied pupils. Some schools experience difficulties. (Full Report, pp.19-20, Section 2.2.7)

2.2.8: Adult modelling of positive relationships/communication was quite widely used, and rated as highly effective. Consistency seen as vital. (Full Report, pp.20-21, Section 2.2.8)

2.2.9: Developing a restorative ethos and culture that supports the development of social and emotional skills was quite widely used, and rated as highly effective. Staff training is an important consideration. (Full Report, pp.21-22, Section 2.2.9 – see also pp. 93-112, Section 4.3: Restorative approaches)

2.3: Classroom strategies are strategies that are delivered through the curriculum to educate students about bullying and discuss anti-bullying work. (Full Report, pp 22-25, Section 2.3)

A range of classroom strategies were widely used (86%-96%), with the exception of quality circles (16%). All were rated moderately effective (range 4.20-4.31).

2.3.1: Curriculum work was used by almost all schools, with a wide variety of approach. Staff training seen as important. (Full Report, p.23, Section 2.3.1)

2.3.2: Cooperative group work was used by most schools (except PRUs), although often confused with peer support. (Full Report, p. 23, Section 2.3.2)

2.3.3: Circle time was used by almost all primary schools, less in secondary sector. Can be used proactively and reactively and has been considerably adapted by some schools. High effectiveness rating. (Full Report, p.24, Section 2.3.3).

2.3.4: Quality circles were rarely used, with many schools not knowing about them. Those that did rated it as highly effective (highest rating in this section) (Full Report, p. 25, Section 2.3.4)

2.4: Playground strategies are strategies to prevent bullying in the playground require specific measures as part of the implementation of a whole-school approach to bullying. (Full Report, pp 25-28, Section 2.4)

Improving school grounds and training lunchtime supervisors were widely used (80%-81%), but fewer schools reported a playground policy (46%). All were rated moderately effective (range 4.04-4.21).

2.4.1: Improving school grounds was widely used especially in primary and special schools - seen as helpful but could be costly. (Full Report, pp.26-27, Section 2.4.1)

2.4.2: Playground policy was used by less than half of schools, but those schools that used it gave the highest effectiveness rating in this section. (Full Report, p. 27, Section 2.4.2)

2.4.3: Training lunchtime supervisors was widely used especially in primary schools. Seen as important for the modelling of positive relationships. Training important but not always easy or effective. (Full Report, pp. 27-28, Section 2.4.3)

2.5: Other proactive strategies are strategies mentioned and used by schools in all sectors that are in addition to those named in our questionnaire.

Other proactive strategies reported by schools included anti-bullying groups and zones; rights respecting schools award; protective behaviours; golden rules; UK resilience training; rules, policies and charters written by students; vertical tutoring; assemblies; anti-bullying awards; assertiveness behaviours and whole-school campaigns. (Full Report, pp.28-29, Section 2.5)

Section 3: Peer support strategies (Full Report, pp. 35-72, Section 3; peer support strategies summary, pp. 63-68)

These use the student peer group both to prevent and respond to bullying. Peer support schemes can be used both proactively and reactively. They are divided into ten main approaches. The six schemes evaluated through the questionnaires were buddy schemes, circle of friends, peer mentoring, peer listening, peer mediation, and bystander defender training, with four more categories arising from further data and case study schools.

3.1: General findings (Full Report, pp. 35-37, Section 3.1)

3.1.1: Usage of peer support strategies varies widely, with buddy schemes, and circle of friends, being widely used (68%-69%), others moderately used (27%-48%), and bystander defender training rarely used (4%).

3.1.2: All types are seen as moderately effective (range 4.08-4.23). Peer support schemes are a flexible intervention and many schools shape the training and use of their peer supporters to the individual needs of their school.

3.1.3: Peer supporters are usually trained, and this training is generally rated highly by staff and trained pupils. Girls tend to volunteer more, so gender balance is often an issue.

3.1.4: For most schools peer support schemes are an effective reporting method for bullying. In the primary sector, peer supporters can be the 'eyes and ears' of the staff in the playground. In the secondary sector, peer support schemes are the most popular form of reporting method for bullying.

3.1.5: Some schemes can be stigmatising, if accessing peer support is too obvious. Some schemes can be under-used, or peer supporters mis-used. However generally peer supporters have high morale. Peer supporters are generally very positive about the schemes; however other pupils have more mixed views, depending on the quality of the schemes, accessibility of peer supporters, and follow-up.

3.1.6: It was difficult to assess direct impact of peer schemes on bullying in the schools as most were used preventatively and there was a general lack of recording. Most bullying incidents were referred on to staff and not dealt with by peer supporters.

Six peer support schemes were surveyed in detail

3.2: Buddy schemes were used by many primary schools but less than half of secondary schools; they are seen as moderately effective. It is particularly effective for students at transition or new to the school, or who need targeted support. (Full Report, pp. 38-40, Section 3.2)

3.3: Peer mediation was used by a minority of schools, more often secondary. It has the highest effectiveness rating in this section. Trained pupils are good role models. As perhaps the most complex form of peer support, training and organisation are critical. (Full Report, pp. 40-45, Section 3.3)

3.4: Peer mentoring was widely used in secondary schools and high effectiveness rating. A flexible peer support scheme but some mentors can feel under-used. (Full Report, pp. 45-48, Section 3.4)

3.5: Peer listening was quite widely used in secondary schools, with moderate effectiveness rating. Confidentiality is an asset of this approach, but this also can limit their potential. (Full Report, pp. 49-52, Section 3.5)

3.6: Circle of friends was used fairly widely and rated as moderately effective; can help to integrate newcomers, but time-consuming and potential for disruption to participating students' timetable. (Full Report, pp. 52-53, Section 3.6)

3.7: Bystander defender training was rarely used, seen as moderately effective by schools which did use it (but the least effective in this section). (Full Report, pp. 53-54, Section 3.7)

Four further peer support strategies

In addition some information was gathered on four other peer support strategies:

3.8: Play leaders/sports mentors were seen as an effective way of keeping younger students involved in constructive activities at break times. (Full Report, pp. 54-56, Section 3.8)

3.9: Bully busters/anti-bullying committees were effective in providing feedback from a student forum, across age ranges. (Full Report, pp. 56-59, Section 3.9)

3.10: Cybermentors were a relatively new scheme with potential but challenging for the mentors. (Full Report, pp. 59-61, Section 3.10)

3.11: Lunchtime clubs was a non-stigmatising way of access to peer support, with general application. (Full Report, pp. 62-63, Section 3.11)

3.12: An evaluation of the peer mentoring pilot commissioned by the former Department of Children, Schools and Families (Full Report pp. 68-72, Section 3.13)

An additional part of this project was to evaluate the effectiveness of the former Department for Children Schools and Families peer mentoring pilot in 12 of the 36 case study schools. The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (MBF) and ChildLine in Partnership with Schools (CHIPS) training was evaluated in two primary and two secondary schools. Beatbullying cybermentor training was evaluated in four secondary schools. In all, 41 staff and 223 students were interviewed. This section could be of interest to schools seeking information on or training for a peer support scheme.

3.12.1: Findings:

- **Mentoring and Befriending Foundation:** Peer mentoring training resources were good and effective. Resources were adapted by most schools. School staff felt well supported, particularly through the networking meetings. There were mixed views about the primary resource and the secondary resource needed updating on safeguarding. (Full Report, pp.69-70, Section 3.13.2)

- **ChildLine in Partnership with Schools:** Peer supporter training was good but scheme lacked follow-up support and the primary training resources need refreshing. Training for secondary school schemes was not interesting or interactive enough and large workshops were counter-productive for trainees. (Full Report, pp. 70-71, Section 3.13.3)

- **Beatbullying:** Cybermentor training was rated as good to very good although some staff had felt marginalised when unable to attend a workshop; the website was safe and well supervised; students felt well supported although the filter could be problematic. Some schools had no accurate idea of how the scheme was performing as data was controlled by Beatbullying. (Full Report, pp. 71-72, Section 3.13.4)

Section 4: Reactive strategies (Full Report, pp. 73-142, Section 4; Reactive strategies summary, pp. 137-142)

Reactive strategies are used by schools to respond directly to bullying. These were divided into five main categories.

4.1: General findings: Usage was high for direct sanctions (92%) and restorative approaches (69%), but much less for support group method (10%) and Pikas method (5%), with school tribunals being rarely employed (2%). All methods were rated as quite effective (range 4.14-4.26), although other reactive strategies reported by some schools (10%) had the highest rating (4.38). (Full Report, pp.73-82, Section 4.1)

4.1.1: Comparing school and local authority surveys: Local authorities differed in their views on reactive strategies, from schools. Local authorities rated direct sanctions and school tribunals less highly than schools did, but the other strategies more highly. Only a half of local authorities recommended direct sanctions (but 92% of schools used them); they strongly supported restorative approaches, and 38% also recommended the support group method (but only 10% of schools used this). (Full Report, pp.73-75, Section 4.1.1)

4.1.2: Reactive strategies and type of bullying: For both primary and secondary sectors, but especially secondary, direct sanctions was the preferred strategy for physical bullying. In the secondary sector only, direct sanctions were also preferred to respond to bullying through damaging belongings, cyberbullying, race-related bullying; and homophobic bullying (and to a lesser extent, gender and disability-related). By contrast, support group method was preferred for relational bullying in both sectors, followed by restorative approaches. The support group method and Pikas method were also preferred for disability-related bullying but only in primary schools. (Full Report, pp.75-77, Section 4.1.2)

4.1.3 - 4.1.7: Findings from bullying incident records: From the 285 incident report forms, success scores were calculated when the bullying stopped (overall 67%, as compared to only partial success at 20%, or no success at 13%). Success rates were compared for serious talks, at 65% (often the first stage in both direct sanctions and restorative approaches); further direct sanctions at 62%; further restorative approaches at 73%; and the support group method at 76%. Success rates were higher in secondary schools, except for the support group method where it was higher in primary schools.

Further restorative approaches and further support group method had most success with verbal and relational bullying. Serious talks, and further direct sanctions, had most effect with cyberbullying.

Schools were examined in terms of whether they used restorative approaches consistently, less consistently, or not at all. Success rates were highest in consistent restorative schools (79%), less so for inconsistently restorative schools (64%), and least for non-restorative schools (58%). (Full Report, pp.78-82, Sections 4.1.3 - 4.1.7)

4.2: Direct sanctions are not so much one strategy or method, but a collective term describing a range of disciplinary procedures used by schools. For this project, schools were asked to give information on a range of sanctions ranging from verbal reprimands; meetings with parents; temporary removals from class; withdrawal of privileges; school community service; detentions and internal exclusion in a special room; short-term exclusion; and permanent exclusion.

Direct sanctions were used by almost all schools and rated as moderately effective (a rating of 4.14). They were seen as sending a clear message that bullying was not tolerated, and as consistent with school policy. About half of schools used them within the framework of other strategies, and one-third if other strategies failed, with about one-eighth as their main strategy. Verbal reprimands and serious talks were often the first step, with many schools also using internal detentions. Direct sanctions were especially used for physical bullying, and (in secondary schools) for racial and homophobic bulling, and cyberbullying. (Full Report, pp. 83-93, Section 4.2 and general findings, pp.73-82, Section 4.1)

4.3: Restorative approaches is a collective term for a range of flexible responses, ranging from informal conversations through to formal facilitated meetings. Restorative approaches work to resolve conflict and repair harm, encouraging those who have caused harm to acknowledge the impact of what they have done and make reparation. Schools were asked to give information on a range of restorative approaches ranging from problem-solving circles; restorative discussions; restorative reconnection meetings between staff and pupils; restorative thinking plans; mini-conferences; classroom conferences and full restorative conferences.

Restorative approaches were used by a majority of schools, especially secondary schools, and rated as moderately effective (a rating of 4.18). It was seen as an educative process for all concerned. The kinds of restorative approach used varied widely, as did the training of staff, and the extent of consistent use through the school. Problem-solving circles and restorative discussion were most widely used, conferences less so. Many schools are in the process of developing this kind of approach, or are interested in developing it. Direct sanctions could be used if students 'refused to restore'. (Full Report, pp. 93-112, Section 4.3 and general findings, pp.73-82, Section 4.1)

4.4: The support group method uses a group-based approach to respond to a bullying incident, following seven steps. In a group meeting, a facilitator explains to the group that the bullied pupil has a problem. The bullying pupil(s) are not required to acknowledge that they themselves had taken part in the bullying, but the facilitator emphasises that all participants must take joint responsibility to help the bullied pupil feel safe.

The support group method was used by 10% of schools and rated as moderately effective (a rating of 4.20). It was seen as encouraging students to take responsibility for their actions through empathy with the bullied student. Procedures varied, and about half of schools using it had received training in the method. It was especially used for relational bullying and (for primary schools) bullying related to disability. Some schools used it because it was non-confrontational and avoided 'punishment'; but other schools did not use it because it avoided directly assigning blame or responsibility. (Full Report, pp. 112-121, Section 4.4 and general findings, pp.73-82, Section 4.1)

4.5: The Pikas method is a series of meetings where bullying children are seen individually and encouraged to recognise the suffering of the bullied child or young person and a positive way forward is agreed; they are not required to acknowledge that they themselves had taken part in the bullying. The bullied child or young person is also seen. If a provocative victim (one whose own behaviour contributes to the bullying), the bullied child is also encouraged to modify his/her behaviour. A group meeting of bullies

and the bullied person is held and a way of coping agreed. Follow-up meetings are held to see if the intervention has been effective.

The Pikas method was used by a few schools (5%) and rated as moderately effective (a rating of 4.14). Only a quarter of schools using it had staff trained in the method. It was seen as an educative process for those involved. However, many schools had no knowledge of the method, or were confused about it. (Full Report, pp.121-125, Section 4.5 and general findings, pp.73-77, Section 4.1.1- 4.1.2)

4.6: School tribunals are an elected court of pupils. The court meets after an alleged incident has occurred; all concerned are interviewed including witnesses, and a decision is made about what punishment (if any) is appropriate. A school staff member chairs the court.

School tribunals were used by very few schools (2%), although those that used it rated effectiveness as quite high (a rating of 4.26). Those schools that did use it saw it as sending a clear message that bullying was unacceptable, while giving pupils an opportunity to contribute. But many schools knew little about them or were not interested. (Full Report, pp.126-130, Section 4.6 and general findings, pp.73-77, Section 4.1.1-4.1.2)

4.7: Other reactive strategies are strategies mentioned and used by schools in all sectors that are in addition to those named in our survey. These included interventions for pupils involved in a bullying incident (personal behaviour plans; anti-bullying plans; SMART targets; support plans; behaviour contracts; good behaviour agreements and one-to-one individual meetings with target setting); adapted peer support schemes; use of the pastoral team; monitoring systems; curricular approaches; staged responses to bullying; whole-school approaches such as assertive discipline, golden rules; group-based approaches; strategies involving parents; and team teach in critical situations. These other reactive strategies were used by 10% of schools and rated as highly effective (a rating of 4.38). (Full Report, pp. 130-137, Section 4.7 and general findings, pp.73-77, Section 4.1.1- 4.1.2)

5: Recommendations

5.1: Whole-school recommendations

By law, a head teacher is required to determine a school's behaviour policy with a view to, amongst other things, encouraging good behaviour and preventing all forms of bullying among pupils. Anti-bullying policies can be either contained in the behaviour policy or be a separate policy.

5.1.1: Anti-bullying policies need a clear definition of bullying and set of procedures if bullying happens – what to do and what the school does; they should cover a range of bullying (including homophobic, race-related, gender-based, faith-based, disability-based, and cyberbullying).

5.1.2: The anti-bullying policy provides a framework for a consistent whole-school approach. As such it needs to be effectively disseminated to all teaching and support staff; parents and pupils.

Accepted good practice includes using:

5.1.3: A toolkit of strategies providing a range of interventions is fundamental as all students and bullying incidents are individual. What works for one will not necessarily work for all.

5.1.4: Having a consistent approach is important for a whole-school approach (e.g. restorative approaches; rights respecting schools; assertive discipline). It needs to be expressed in the anti-bullying policy; all staff need to be trained; students briefed; parents informed; peer supporters trained and embedded in the curriculum (Full Report, pp. 99-102, Section 4.3.6; further analyses of restorative approaches, p. 82, Section 4.1.7)

5.1.5: Staff training including knowledge about bullying, and the range of anti-bullying interventions, should be a part of initial and ongoing teacher training, for a wide range of staff. For more advanced training, (e.g. in restorative approaches, Full Report, pp. 105-108, Section 4.3.11), 'train-the-trainer' schemes are an economical approach which supports consistency.

5.1.6: Auditing for bullying behaviour on a regular basis provides base line information from the students about the levels and types of bullying prevalent in the school.

5.1.7: Multiple reporting systems should be in place that are non-stigmatising and exposing; identify vulnerable students at intake; track student behaviour to target additional peer support; and provide evidence for the effectiveness of interventions.

5.1.8: A centralised recording system which identifies vulnerable students at intake; tracks student behaviour for evaluation of support and provides evidence for the effectiveness of interventions including peer support.

5.1.9: Regular evaluation of anti-bullying work is vital to know whether what the school uses works.

5.1.10: Training providers and resources need an approved standard for an informed choice.

5.2: Proactive strategies

Schools need to use a range of proactive strategies to create an environment that inhibits bullying both in the school building and playground. Based on our findings we recommend:

5.2.1: Staff lead by example in modelling behaviour with full support from the school. (Full Report, pp.20-21, Section 2.2.8)

5.2.2: Encourage parent/carer involvement with an 'open door' policy for access to staff. (Full Report, pp.19-20, Section 2.2.7; also restorative approaches pp.102-104, Section 4.3.8)

5.2.3: Use assemblies to underpin a clear, anti-bullying message. (Full Report, p.18, Section 2.2.5)

5.2.4: Consider using a school council as an effective reporting system but schools need to listen; acknowledge and act on the student feedback or it becomes tokenistic (Full Report, pp.18-19, Section 2.2.6 and bully busters, pp. 56-59, Section 3.9)

5.2.5: Consider developing a restorative ethos and culture to support the development of social and emotional skills (See Full Report, pp. 21-22, Section 2.2.9 and restorative approaches pp. 93-112, Section 4.3)

5.2.6: Use curriculum work to embed anti-bullying work, particularly through interactive methods (e.g. drama), PSHEE (Full Report, pp.16-17, Section 2.2.2) and SEAL (Full Report, p.17, Section 2.2.3), circle time (Full Report, p. 24, Section 2.3.3), and consider use of cooperative group work (Full Report, p. 23, Section 2.3.2) and quality circles. (Full Report, p. 25, Section 2.3.4)

5.2.7: Schools should develop a playground policy (such as playground rules or a playground charter) – this is underused but effective. (Full Report, p. 27, Section 2.4.2)

5.2.8: Consider improving the school grounds – anti-bullying maps produced by students can identify hot spots – playgrounds need quiet zones and zoning for activities (Full Report, pp. 26-27, Section 2.4.1)

5.2.9: Training lunchtime supervisors is essential if supervising a peer support scheme; schools need to find creative and accommodating ways of overcoming lunchtime supervisors' reluctance to be trained possibly by asking them what they need most. (Full Report, pp. 27-28, Section 2.4.3)

5.3: Peer support strategies

Peer support strategies are an inclusive way of involving students in anti-bullying work. Based on our findings we recommend:

5.3.1: Recruitment: Recruit the right number to avoid drop-out - too many become bored, too few become overworked. Older year groups are preferred by students but sixth-form peer supporters can be intimidating for younger students. Applications with a personal statement and C.V. preferred to peer nomination. (Full Report, buddy schemes, p. 40, Sections 3.2.4 and peer mediation schemes, pp. 43-45, Section 3.3.4 and peer mentoring schemes, p. 48, Section 3.4.4)

5.3.2: Positively promote schemes and keep a high profile through assemblies; notice boards; TV screens and the intranet. (Full Report, peer mediation schemes, pp. 41-42, Section 3.3.2 ; peer mentoring schemes, pp. 46-47, Section 3.4.2 and peer listening schemes, pp. 49-50, Section 3.5.2)

5.3.3: Training can be structured using a rolling programme to prevent gaps in provision and provide opportunities for trainees to shadow experienced peer supporters; 'train-the-trainer' schemes can be more economical. Peer supporters trained in a reactive strategy (e.g. restorative approaches) are more effective in dealing with low level bullying. (Full Report, peer mediation schemes, pp. 41-42, Section 3.3.2 and peer mentoring schemes, pp. 46-47, Section 3.4.2)

5.3.4: Supervise peer supporters by designated supervisor(s), preferably trained with the peer supporters, through regular meetings (Full Report, peer mediation schemes, pp. 43-45, Section 3.3.4; peer mentoring schemes, p. 48, Section 3.4.4)

5.3.5: Provide peer supporters with a designated space otherwise students do not know where to find them; supervision can be problematic and peer supporters can feel undervalued (Full Report, peer mentoring schemes, p. 48, Section 3.4.4 and peer listening schemes, pp. 51-52, Section 3.5.4)

5.3.6: Peer support schemes can be targeted at transition but Yr 7 form tutors, heads of Yr 7 and new teachers need training in working with peer supporters to use the scheme fully; the peer supporter/student ratio needs to be high or support for the new intake is compromised. Outreach work to feeder primaries for peer supporters targeted at transition establishes good relationships and helps make induction days easier for the newcomers. (Full Report, peer mediation schemes, pp. 43-45, Section 3.3.4 and peer mentoring schemes, p. 48, Section 3.4.4)

5.3.7: Having peer support schemes for inside and outside the school is effective particularly for larger schools (e.g. buddy schemes; playleader or sport mentor schemes based in the playground and peer mediation; mentoring or listening schemes based inside). Schemes based in the playground provide activities and can refer students to the other scheme for support. In smaller schools, playleaders and buddies can be trained to provide activities and mediate in low level conflict. (Full Report, buddy schemes, pp. 38-40, Section 3.2; peer mediation schemes, pp. 40-45, Section 3.3; peer mentoring schemes; pp. 45-48, Section 3.4; peer listening schemes, pp. 49-52, Section 3.5 and playleader/sports mentoring schemes, pp. 54-56, Section 3.8)

5.3.8: Access to peer supporters needs to avoid public exposure and be discrete and non-stigmatising; a drop-in centre or lunchtime club is a good example to be encouraged. (Full Report, peer listeners, pp. 51-52, Section 3.5.4 and lunchtime clubs, pp. 62-63, Section 3.11)

5.3.9: Senior management teams need to be supportive of the peer support schemes otherwise scheme supervisors and mentors become demoralised. (Full Report, peer mentoring, p. 48, Section 3.4.4)

5.4: The former DCSF peer mentoring pilot (Full Report, pp. 68-72, Section 3.13). Based on our findings we recommend:

5.4.1: Mentoring and Befriending Foundation peer mentoring schemes: (Full Report, pp. 69-70, Section 3.13.2) The primary resource needs to be revisited as there were mixed reviews from schools. Some said it was too simplistic; others too complicated. The secondary resource needs to include guidance on child protection and safeguarding.

5.4.2: ChildLine in Partnership with Schools (CHIPS) peer support schemes: (Full Report, pp. 70-71, Section 3.13.3) Both primary and secondary school training need refreshing and training delivery needs to be of a consistent standard. Trainers need to provide follow-up and on-going support to schools. Workshops size must not be driven by cost effectiveness alone as training can be compromised.

5.4.3: Beatbullying cybermentors: (Full Report, pp. 71-72, Section 3.13.4) School staff need more contact through feedback and ongoing support to make them feel included. Inconsistencies in the filter software need addressing.

5.5: Reactive strategies

Reactive strategies are used by schools to respond to a bullying incident. Based on our findings we recommend:

5.5.1: Direct sanctions work best as a clear set of consequences expressed in both the anti-bullying policy and school or classroom rules; mostly used within the framework of other reactive strategies (Full Report, p. 87, Section 4.2.5; also pp. 88-89, Sections 4.2.7 and 4.2.8; general findings, pp. 73-82, Section 4.1). Also consider:

- using a seclusion or isolation room for internal exclusion, complemented by a safe haven for more vulnerable students (Full Report, p. 90, Section 4.2.10)
- providing a re-integration process for excluded students (Full Report, p. 89, Section 4.2.9)

5.5.2: Restorative approaches provide an effective, flexible range of strategies to prevent and respond to bullying, but need to be used consistently and throughout the whole school (Full Report, pp. 99-102, Section 4.3.6; general findings, pp. 73-82, Section 4.1). If adopting restorative approaches as a whole-school approach:

- provide whole staff training – adult modelling is critical to consistency and effectiveness of the strategy, and staff need training in restorative approaches before attempting to apply it to a bullying incident (Full Report, pp. 105-108, Section 4.3.11)
- embed restorative approaches with the students – including training any peer schemes in restorative approaches (Full Report, pp. 99-102, Section 4.3.6; also peer mediation pp. 41-43, Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3)
- make restorative approaches transparent in policies and procedures (Full Report, p.102, Section 4.3.7
- direct sanctions are needed as a back up if the restorative process fails. (Full Report, pp. 104-105, Section 4.3.9)

5.5.3: Support group method can be effective especially for relational bullying. The strategy is most appropriate for older primary students and younger secondary students, particularly at transition (Full Report, pp. 117-118, Section 4.4.7; general findings, pp. 73-82, Section 4.1). If used

- provide staff training before attempting to apply the support group method to a bullying incident. (Full Report, pp. 116-117, Section 4.4.6)
- other strategies such as restorative approaches or direct sanctions are needed as a back up if the process fails (Full Report, p. 116, Section 4.4.5)

5.5.4: Pikas method may be effective as one of a range of strategies either when other group-based approaches did not work or for 'provocative victims' (Full Report, pp. 121-126, Section 4.5 and general findings, pp.73-77, Section 4.1.1- 4.1.2). If used:

- provide staff training before attempting to apply the Pikas method to a bullying incident
- other strategies such as restorative approaches or direct sanctions are needed as a back up if the process fails

5.5.5: School tribunals can be an adapted form of school council, and facilitate student involvement (Full Report, pp. 126-130, Section 4.6 and general findings, pp.73-77, Section 4.1.1- 4.1.2). If used:

- schools must use school tribunals with care – facilitators need to be trained and all involved thoroughly briefed and clear about procedures and rules
- participating students, particularly primary, need to be mature enough – it is not appropriate for very young students
- other strategies such as restorative approaches or direct sanctions are needed as a back up if the process fails.

A selection of case study schools as examples of good practice in anti-bullying work is given in the full report (pp. 150-156).