Student Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

1 Basic Information

Name of organisation	NCYPE
Policy reviewed and updated by	Safeguarding Team
Staff responsible for policy implementation	All staff
Staff responsible for monitoring and reviewing	Executive
Date of reviewed policy	December 2010
Date of next review	December 2012

2 Context of the Organisation

The National Centre for Young People with Epilepsy (NCYPE) is the UK's pre-eminent provider of residential and day special education, care, assessment and treatment for children and young people aged 5 to 25 with complex epilepsy and a wide range of related social, emotional, physical and educational disabilities. The school and further education college cater for just under 200 students during term time and some children reside at the Centre year round. The NCYPE works in partnership with Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust (GOSH) and the Institute of Child Health (ICH) in service delivery, research and academic activities.   In addition to providing medical, nursing, therapy and psychology services to school and college students, NCYPE offers Diagnostic and Interdisciplinary Assessments, Epilepsy Outreach and Rehabilitation services in collaboration with GOSH. The consultant medical staff hold joint appointments between NCYPE and GOSH and The Prince of Wales's Chair of Childhood Epilepsy is held jointly by the tripartite partnership. Approximately 800 staff are employed across a range of disciplines.

3 Policy Formulation

The bullying policy supports statements made in the Safeguarding and Behaviour Policy documents and reflects the fundamental right of every student to feel safe whilst in our care at NCYPE.

The policy reflects a proactive, positive and informed approach to behaviour management specifically in dealing with issues of bullying.

Students need to be taught to adopt safe and responsible practices in using new technologies, including the internet, and are expected to display appropriate behaviour online as well as offline.

4 General Statement

"Bullying represents one of the major behaviour and discipline issues in schools today"
("When they feel utterly alone" dfee.gov.uk).
This policy aims to raise staff awareness and promote positive management of both bully and the target student within the framework of protection of students' rights, and to outline procedures for dealing with any bullying incidents.

It is the belief of the Executive and Governors of NCYPE that bullying can constitute a safeguarding concern and that it needs to be met by firm and consistent responses.

It is the responsibility of all the staff to be vigilant and proactive in the implementation of Procedures for Managing Bullying Concerns below. The aim of these procedures is the elimination of incidents of bullying behaviours amongst the students and the creation of a safer learning environment for all.

5 Definition of Bullying

The Government defines bullying as :
"Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or a group either physically or emotionally". *(source: Safe to Learn DCSF 2007)*

Various types of bullying have been identified, this list is not exhaustive:
- Emotional   being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical   pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist   racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Religious   based on religious beliefs, disparaging, offensive actions and/or remarks
- Sexual   unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality/sexual orientation
- Verbal   name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber   the use of Information Communications Technology to harass and bully. There are differences in scale and impact involved in this and they are discussed in section 9.

Signs which may raise concerns about the possible bullying of a student:

 A child or young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Staff should be concerned and monitor closely if a student:
- is frightened of walking to school/college and will not talk about it
- is unwilling to go to school/college (phobic)
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence; starts stammering; cries themselves to sleep at night and/or has nightmares
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- feels ill in the morning or has unexplained physical symptoms
- begins to do poorly in their work
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully) or has other monies continually "lost"
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable unexpectedly
- is bullying other students
- develops an eating disorder or stops eating altogether
- is frightened to say what's wrong when approached
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone; is nervous/ jumpy when a cyber message is received; is anxious or disturbed after being online

It is clear that these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying may be a possibility.

It is also recognised that some students' behaviour can be experienced as bullying by others but that they have not intended this given their level of functioning and awareness. There is still however a victim and in such cases, protective measures will be required for those affected by the behaviors.

Staff should be always vigilant in recognising that what students might perceive as bullying, they may not. It is how the target student who is being bullied feels about it that counts.

6 Procedures for Managing Bullying Concerns

Summary

As above any incidence of bullying may represent a safeguarding issue and must be treated as a concern by both staff and students. When an incident is reported, or staff witness an episode of bullying behaviour, that member of staff must firstly ensure that the student who has been targeted is safe and supported, then advise the bullying student of the inappropriateness of their behaviour, and ask them to apologise. Work is needed with the bullying student to reinforce this. The incident should be referred to the line manager who will arrange for the actions below to be taken, and ensure that the head of the

relevant department is informed. An Incident Report will be required. The Safeguarding Team will need to be made aware.

Checklist of actions to be taken

- Ensure the safety of and offer support to the target student: this is essential. This could be by:
    - providing more supervision from staff; encourage bystanders, if possible, to support the target
    - separating the students involved to prevent recurrence
    - making an alternative arrangement for either student's management in the short or long term

- The bullying student should be asked to apologise to their victim and reconciliation attempted between the students. If the bully will not apologise it is important that they are made aware nevertheless of the negative impact of their actions and that this is not appropriate behaviour.

- Address the reasons for the bully's actions and either make a referral to an appropriate specialist or engage that student in a supporting/guiding dialogue. This would depend upon the extent or level of concern. In severe and/or persistent cases the option of suspension or exclusion of the bullying student should not be ruled out.

- All incidents of bullying must be reported immediately and recorded by completing an Incident Report. Bullying behaviour is monitored in this way, bringing persistent or difficult cases to the attention of the Service Manager, who has a monitoring role to undertake.

- The Safeguarding Officer on call must be contacted with details in order for the Safeguarding Team to review incidents of bullying or harassment involving students. The member(s) of staff who witnessed the incident should make the call, and be ready to refer to the Incident Report that has been filed.

- There will need to be consideration given to NCYPE contacting external agencies (Social Services and/or the Police) if it is evident that the concern amounts to a serious safeguarding issue for the target student or a criminal act on the part of the bullying student.

- In any unresolved cases NCYPE accepts that parents or students might wish to use the complaints procedure and, if still dissatisfied, they may choose to involve external agencies.

7 Staff Responsibilities

- Everyone on site, including students, must accept responsibility for eliminating bullying.

- Everyone must respond consistently and effectively to issues of bullying.

- Staff members are expected to use the agreed procedures and to take into account both bully, target, bystander(s) and the environment in which the situation arises.

- It is the duty of staff to communicate effectively with each other regarding any suspicion or concern around students bullying or being bullied and to report all incidents.

8 Preventative Measures

- All staff who work with students will plan to develop positive relationships and actively raise students' self-esteem through positive reinforcements, recognising and celebrating positive attitudes and behaviours (see Behaviour Management Policy).

- Staff will demonstrate appropriate role modeling for the students, by their own behaviour to each other and to all students at all times.

- Students will be involved in relevant activities via their curriculum to raise awareness and learn appropriate behaviours specifically with regard to bullying, e.g. in PSD/PSHE, SEAL, circle time, in assemblies, college tutor groups and meetings on the students' residential units.

- Students will be supported to understand themselves and others and to try and develop the skills to enable them to report and/or deal effectively with being bullied or witnessing incidents of bullying.

9 Cyberbullying

"Cyberbullying is an aggressive intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself"
(Report to the Ant-Bullying Alliance by Goldsmiths College, University of London)

Cyberbullying is a destructive, insidious and invasive form of bullying and has a much greater impact on the target person, to the extent that they may harm themselves very seriously, possibly fatally.

What exactly is different about cyberbullying?

- Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces that previously would have been regarded as safe and personal. The target of the bully can be reached in their own house, even their bedroom, and they may feel that there is no place to hide or no way to escape. Traditionally we are taught to 'walk away' from bullies but that is not possible in this situation.
- Cyberbullying can occur outside of school or college hours; it can happen at any point in twenty four hours a day given the nature of electronic communications.
- Cyberbullying by mobile phone cuts a young person off from a large chunk of their social interactions and possible support if they feel afraid to turn it back on for fear of receiving more nasty messages/calls.
- The abuse of a target child or young person can reach a mass audience in hours - one instance of cyberbullying can be experienced as multiple attacks as others get the information and the humiliation and/or abuse is repeated.
- Long term consequences - the same cyberbullying instance can re-appear at a later date and be re-circulated at whim by the bully or by anyone else who has forwarded it - a 'bystander' or 'accessory'– it is very difficult for the target young person to get closure as long as the material exists on some-one else's phone or on a website.
- 'Bystander's and 'accessories' to cyberbullying become part of the bullying themselves when they pass on or show to others humiliating or abusive content about the target. Those who do this do not always recognise what they are doing as bullying but it is. It is important that 'whole-school' and 'whole-college' communities understand their responsibility to report cyberbullying and to support the target young person.
- The target person may not know who is bullying them from amongst their social circle, thus causing suspicion to arise in all their relationships – they do not know who to trust. It can be extremely disturbing to be the target of cyberbullying when the bully is anonymous. (Cyberbullies may *possibly* be tracked, as they leave behind evidence.)
- Cyberbullying can involve identity theft, unauthorized access and impersonation.
- Cyberbullying can take place without the target young person person being aware that abusive and/or untrue content about them has been posted online.
- The cyberbully may have been bullied themselves and is using this method of bullying as a form of revenge.
- The distance that technology allows in communication means that the bully fails to observe or to understand the full impact of their actions.
- Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional - the result of simply not thinking or being unaware of the consequences. Raising awareness is needed.

The bully will usually try to conceal their identity or pretend to be another person. Bullies can take another person's phone and use it to sent untrue hurtful texts, gossip or make distressing calls, or use another person's email address to achieve the same result. The bullying can involve threats, intimidation and/or cyber-stalking (repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages).

Categories of cyberbullying that have been identified so far

Text message bullying

Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras (e.g. so-called 'Happy Slapping')

Phone call bullying via mobile phone – including silent calls

Email bullying

Chat Rooms and Message Boards bullying

Bullying via Virtual Learning Environments - hacking into a person's accounts or files and destroying their work

Instant Messaging (IM) bullying - distressing messages sent in real time online.

Webcam bullying - children and young people can be persuaded in their own rooms to do and make an electronic image of something unwise that they would not do outside their home, and the content is then made public, or used to manipulate and/or threaten them.

Website bullying via defamatory blogs, personal websites et al.

Social Network and Gaming sites – there is a significant increase in these sites, which can provide new opportunities for cyberbullying. Information on a person's pages can be mis-used by bullies and predators. People can use their own sites to spread rumors and nasty messages can be posted on them by others. Bullies can work up fake profiles to bully and harass other users.

In short, wherever there is an internet based service a cyberbully can find a way to operate.

10 How to tackle cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is already a significant issue for many children and young people. Staff, parents and young people need to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying and to tackle it whenever it occurs. Students and parents need to be aware that NCYPE will support then if cyberbullying happens out of school/college.

The procedures for managing cyberbullying concerns, staff responsibilities for dealing with cyberbullying and preventative measures at NCYPE are the same as for any other type of bullying.

However, specifically related to cyberbullying the following preventative measures also apply:

- Maintaining the whole-school/whole college community approach involving understanding and talking about cyberbullying. Reminding students of the risks of communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely and how to protect themselves by blocking and using privacy settings. Student need to know not to retaliate to abusive emails, text messages or phone calls and that they should always tell a member of staff if they receive them; they should keep abusive messages of any sort in case of an investigation; they should never give out personal contact details online, or post photographs of themselves online.

- Continue to promote the positive and responsible use of technology in school and college.

- Maintain the current protocol that requires all relevant students in both school and college to sign the Student User Policy Agreement of the NCYPE ICT User Policy regarding usage of the internet.

- Maintaining current blocks on harmful sites; security systems are already in place to prevent images and information about children, young people and staff being accessed improperly from outside school or college.

- Maintain the current monitoring of all e-communications used on the site or as part of school and college activities off-site.

- Ensure that clear policies are communicated and reinforced about the use of mobile phones in school and college and at other times when children and young people are under the authority of NCYPE.

- Maintain the active monitoring in place in School and College work as part of ICT learning across site with children, young people and parents to make sure that future new communications technologies are used safely.

- Adhere to the Internet Policy in ensuring that any access to social network sites for individual students is based on an individual risk assessment of their skills and abilities.

- Maximise online empowerment for relevant students with advice on how to respond to cyberbullying – see Appendix 1

- Ensure that students, parents and staff are all aware of these procedures and of the possible outcomes in dealing with cyberbullying, including bullying that occurs out of school/college (i.e. access to social sites could be barred; a mobile phone may be confiscated; risk of suspension or exclusion in severe and/or persistent cases.)

No harassment, threats or bullying conducted electronically will be tolerated at NCYPE.

11 Legal Perspective on cyberbullying

Education Law: The Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows Headteachers and teachers powers to regulate pupils' behaviour out of school and also gives a defence for school staff to examine and/or confiscate items suspected of being used for cyberbullying, eg mobile phones.

Criminal Law
Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment and threatening and menacing communications. Schools and colleges are advised in the literature from the Department for Children, Schools and Families to contact the police if they feel that the law has been broken as some cyberbullying activities could come under a range of different laws – e.g. the Public Order Act 1986; the Malicious Communications Act 1988; the Protection from Harassment Act 1997(criminal and civil provision); section 127 of the Communications Act 2003. An ASBO under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 could also be used for cyberbullying.

NOTE: Staff who feel that they may be the victims of bullying or cyberbullying by colleagues or by managers need to refer to the Employee Protection (Harassment) Policy and Procedures.

12 References

- Bullying – Don't Suffer in Silence, an anti-bullying pack for schools HMSO 2000

- NCYPE Safeguarding Policy

- NCYPE Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures.

- NCYPE ICT User Policy

- Cyberbullying: Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools – Department for Children, Schools and Families 2007
- Childnet International - presentation May 2007 at Online Child Protection Conference

- Cyberbullying in your school – Your Legal Considerations - presentation May 2007 as above

- Acknowledgments to the Kidscape Organisation – extracts from their model policy are incorporated above

Appendix 1

Key advice to relevant students – Anti-Cyberbullying Code
(synopsis from Cyberbullying: Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools)

Always respect others
Remember that when you send a message you cannot see the impact. What you think is a joke may really hurt some-one else.

Always ask permission before you take a photo of some-one.

If you receive a rude or nasty message or picture about some-one else, do not forward it. You could be helping the bully and even be accused of being a cyberbully yourself. You might even be breaking the law.

Think before you send
Think before you send any text or image about yourself by email or by mobile phone or before you put it on a website. It can be made public very quickly and could stay online for anyone to see forever. Think about your teacher, lecturer, family or even a future employer seeing that text or photo.

Treat your password like your toothbrush
Don't let *anyone* know your password. Change it regularly. Choose hard-to guess words with symbols and numbers. Only give your mobile number and any personal website address to trusted friends.

Block the bully
Most good websites have a way you can block and report some-one who is behaving badly online. Make use of this and stop the behaviour from happening to you.

Don't retaliate or reply!
Replying to bullying messages or calls, especially if you are hurt or angry is just what the bully wants.

Save the evidence
Learn how to keep records of offensive and nasty messages. You can show others what has happened and these can help school, college, internet service provider, mobile phone company or even the police to look into cyberbullying. Ask if you need help to do this.

Make sure you tell!
You have a right not to be harassed and bullied online.

Tell a member of staff in school, college or in care so that steps can be taken to support and help you.

Tell the provider of the service that you have been bullied. Check their websites to see where to report this. Ask if you need help to do this.

Finally – if you see cyberbullying going on – don't just stand there, support the person being bullied and report the bullying. How would you feel if no-one stood up for you?

Appendix 2

Selection of other organisations for further information

www.anti-bullyingalliance.com – the Anti-Bullying Alliance brings together over 60 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying; also has a parents' section.

www.kidscape.org.uk – preventing bullying, protecting children. Kidscape also run a parents' and carers' anti-bullying helpline, and training courses and workshops on supporting bullied children.

Specific to Cyberbullying

www.childnet-int.org - a range of resources for primary and secondary schools, for children, for young people and for teachers and parents on making the internet safer.

www.chatdanger.com – informs about the potential dangers online (including bullying) and advice on how to stay safer while chatting.

www.digizen.org – a site about being a responsible digital citizen and building safer spaces online.

 www.childnet-int.org/sorted/ - a resource for knowing how to maximize online security developed by a young person for young people