

Code of Practice to Stop Sexual Bullying in Schools

When we refer to 'sexual bullying' in this code of practice we mean:

Any bullying behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, that is based on a person's sexuality or gender. It is when sexuality or gender is used as a weapon by boys or by girls. It can be carried out to a person's face, behind their back or by use of technology.

For example:

- Using words that refer to someone's sexuality as a general put down (like calling something 'gay' to mean that it is not very good)
- Using sexual words to put someone down (like calling someone 'slut')
- Making threats or jokes about serious and frightening subjects like rape
- Gossiping and spreading rumours about some ones sexuality and sex life - including graffiti
- Touching someone in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable
- Touching parts of someone's body that they don't want to be touched
- Forcing someone to act in a sexual way.

"Groping, grabbing, insults eg swear words stereotypical gender roles, when appearance and sexuality are demonized." Young woman, School in Haringey London

We believe that young people and schools should recognise and challenge sexual bullying in the following ways:

- Have a whole school anti-bullying policy agreed by students and staff that expects everyone to respect themselves and others, and that identifies and addresses sexual bullying;
- Being clear about how incidents of sexual bullying should be reported, how they will be dealt with and what support will be available for the person on the receiving end;
- Talking about sexual bullying in the home-school contract, stating that it is not acceptable and explaining how it will be dealt with;
- Discussing sexual bullying, how often it occurs and how it can be addressed at school council meetings, form time or other appropriate opportunities;
- Making it clear to bullies why sexual bullying is wrong and the harm it can do;
- Creating a place in schools where young people can talk to teachers who will tackle the problem and treat it as the serious matter that it is;
- Provide confidential forms for young people to log incidences;
- Dealing with sexual bullying through work in lessons (especially PSHE), assemblies and form time - including looking at the way men, women and sexuality are presented in the press, on television and in computer games.

"... actually get actions done to stop it" Young man, School in Coventry

"get a designated person/teacher that is selected to talk and advise people concerning sexual bullying. Raise awareness by talking to girls and boys at school" Young woman, School in Haringey, London