

All Together Case study: The school seeks to learn from each incident and, where necessary, improve practice

This case studies main focuses have been to:

- To consider how incidents are recorded, particularly incidents which in isolation, may not appear as a bullying concern.
- To review SIMS and identify if any changes can be made to improve the recording of bullying incidents.

Background on the School

Castle Hill High School is a day special school for students, aged 11 – 18, with significant and complex needs. Our most recent Ofsted inspection in May 2017 judged the school to be OUTSTANDING in all areas.

In March 2018 we were awarded the Anti-Bullying Quality Mark (ABQM). This is a national award that enables schools to demonstrate to students, parents, OFSTED and others that the safety of students is taken seriously and bullying is not tolerated.

Desired outcome

- We wanted to review how we monitor our behavioural incidents which relate to bullying and/or have the potential to lead to bullying or equally identify behaviours as bullying.
- Furthermore, we hoped that the review would highlight any improvements to our recording systems that could be made in order to make it a more robust system across the school.
- In line with this we also wanted to review if SIMS could be updated to reflect any changes or to further help with analysis.

What is the action we took?

Using our updated anti-bullying policy which had a new section on derogatory language, we updated our SIMS recording system to show this as a specific entry. Additionally, we found we were able to add sub-categories to the main types of bullying.

We worked on improving the reporting system, specifically to include incidents which on their own may not be seen as bullying but over a period of time may highlight a concern. So as a result our Anti bullying log/spreadsheet has been updated to include a section to record any

concerns and/or reports made of "potential" bullying or pupils to specifically monitor for more evidence. These may be one off incidents not on SIMs (not a C3 slip).

We remodelled our Anti-bullying log sheet to include SMART targets and to identify roles of pupils in any bullying incident.

During this process, a case of bullying was reported and the staff member initially dealing with this in the Behaviour and Inclusion needed a refresher on the correct procedures to follow. As a result we created a bullying checklist form (paper copy) to prompt the correct procedures to be followed, without having to immediately refer to policies, guidelines or the key member of the team.

We also decided to review the current C2 (Low level incidents) reporting system, currently in use by all staff members across the whole school. This does not just log instances of bullying or bullying type behaviour but any low level behavioural incident which has been dealt with, without the need to pass onto the Behaviour and Inclusion team. It came to light that some of the incidents were potentially a concern for bullying/derogatory language when looked at as a whole, rather than a single incident by a single staff member. After discussion with the wider school community, the system has now been refined. Staff now highlight any incidents with the potential to escalate into bullying behaviour or repeated use of derogatory language in yellow on the C2 spreadsheet.

Training to all staff on anti-bullying, relational conflict and the use of the new forms and procedures has been implemented.

Outcome

Updating SIMS has allowed us to show more detailed recording of a C3 incident using the SIMS software, which then leads to enhanced reporting features at the end of each half term. In turn, this has then provided more detailed information for review in the Interventions and Wellbeing team meetings in order to improve practice where possible.

It came to light during the review that the SLT team/safeguarding have their own system for any bullying issues that come direct to them. This has now been addressed and SLT/safeguarding and the Behaviour team all use the same recording system, although some safeguarding matters may need to be censored and recorded in more detail on the secure safeguarding server. We also decided to open up the same recording system to form tutors, so some of the lower level issues can be recorded in one set place and used for analysis and to determine if there is a bigger concern to address, based on more data being available. It has enabled us to monitor these more closely for patterns in behaviours/incidents. Initially this spreadsheet was used by the Behaviour team alone. Information collated and passed to the head teacher/governors every half term has also improved as a result.

The use of SMART targets has proved beneficial as it now clearly identifies timeframes for each recommendation and actions to be taken and by whom. The paper copy checklist has been used once since its introduction, and it proved a useful tool in taking action more timely and precisely.

By reviewing and updating the procedures on the C2 low level incident monitoring spreadsheet, this now clearly identifies incidents of more interest in relation to bullying behaviours. These are now reviewed by the behaviour and inclusion team on a weekly basis and the information placed onto the Anti-bullying spreadsheet as necessary for further monitoring and discussion in key meetings.

Each half term, the information from the spread sheets and SIMS are now discussed by the Wellbeing team and further actions agreed.

All these improvements have helped to create what feels a more robust system that ensures all the information acquired is centralised and allows for action to be taken promptly and with much more information which can be used to create an action plan. This has also allowed us the opportunity to look at each individual case together and analyse if something could have been done differently or more efficiently.

Information that we need staff to be aware of regarding pupils, is done as part of a whole school daily briefing session. This happens each morning and all staff attend. Staff members that do not attend for any reason have access to what was discussed in the daily briefing notes which available on the school server.

Learning

We have learnt that there are always improvements that can be made to enhance reporting for the benefit of both staff and pupils. Consulting across departments brings different perspectives, which has led to bullying incidents now being covered in the well-being meetings.

This triangulated information has fed into us being able to pinpoint more pupils for specific 1:1 and group interventions, such as Self-esteem and friendship groups. We have also added restorative approaches training into the Intervention resources as a positive way to reduce bullying behaviours and to understand empathy and being in another person's shoes.

One example of this working is our most recent report of bullying which came from a pupil's parent via email. All of the new documentation was implemented and the process worked smoothly and efficiently. As a result of this and discussions had with other departments in subsequent meetings and conversations with parents, we have swiftly implemented a friendship group for the pupil, as it was apparent that the pupil needed some intense work

surrounding his understanding of friendships, how friends should treat one another. An evaluation of work that has been done with a pupil during an intervention session, is also available for all staff to read. This is also emailed out at the end of each half term.