



National Network of Parent Carer Forums
'Our Strength is our Shared Experience'
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contact a family
for families with disabled children

Considering bullying of disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEND) in the Local Offer and a school's information offer

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires a Local Authority to produce a Local Offer that sets out what parent carers and children and young people with SEND can expect in their local area.

Within the SEND Code of Practice, it also confirms that the "Local Offer" must demonstrate the arrangements schools in their local area have in place for

"supporting the emotional mental and social development of disabled children and young people and those with SEN (this should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of pupils and students with SEN and measure to prevent bullying)"

SEN Code of Practice June 2014 s4.32



All local schools are required to provide a range of information for parent carers and children and young people to demonstrate how they meet the needs of disabled children and those with special educational needs.

The Children and Families Act 2014, and the Equality Act 2010 places some specific duties about the kind of information that schools must provide. Schools are also required to have a behaviour management policy which includes details of how they manage and deal with bullying in their school. (Some schools choose to have a separate Anti Bullying Policy)

Research and evidence clearly demonstrates that disabled children and young people and those with Special Educational Needs are more likely to be persistently bullied during their school lives. (Chatzitheochari P. &, June 2014) The research confirmed that disabled children and young people in England are facing the "double disadvantage" of bullying and having a special educational need or disability.

The psychological and behavioural consequences of bullying victimisation are detrimental. Aside from its immediate health and psychological impact (Nansel et al., 2001; Rigby, 2000), being a bully victim in school is a predictor of low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression during adulthood and has a negative impact on subsequent socio-economic attainment (Arseneault et al., 2010; Bond et al., 2001; Takizawa et al., 2014; Wolke et al., 2013). Previous research has also established links with eating disorders, truancy, as well as suicidal ideations (Nansel et al., 2001; Rigby and Slee, 1993). These findings suggest that bullying may constitute an important pathway through which social inequalities across a range of domains are produced, underlining the **importance** of identifying those that experience a higher risk of being bullied in early childhood and adolescence.



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Because of this clear evidence about the increased experiences of disabled children and those with special educational needs of bullying, and the impact of this on individuals, it is vitally important to understand the reasons why this is. And for schools to consider the implications for them as a whole school, and what they can specifically do to support disabled children and young people to prevent bullying where possible, and to manage it well when it is either identified, or children and young people disclose about their bullying experiences.

Some Local Authorities may have an authority wide anti bullying strategy, but there is no statutory requirement for them to do this.

What can parent carer forums do?

We know that negative attitudes, bullying and harassment are a significant barrier for children and young people with special educational needs and disability that have long term negative impacts on their confidence, self esteem, and independence.

For your Local Offer

For those forums who are participating with or co-producing their Local Offer, this may be something you may want to include in your discussions with your local authority. Some discussion starters could include:

- ◇ Do you have an authority wide anti bullying strategy? If not – should you?
- ◇ If you do, is there particular reference to the bullying of children and young people with SEND?
- ◇ If not, why not, and how can this be remedied?
- ◇ Are there any particular streams of work to support children and young people with SEND in relation to bullying or harassment?
- ◇ If there are these should be included in your Local Offer
- ◇ If not perhaps the authority needs to consider if there is a need for this in your local area

For schools:

As the Local Offer is required to demonstrate the arrangements schools in a local area have in place for supporting the emotional mental and social development of disabled children and young people and those with SEN (this should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of pupils and students with SEN and measure to prevent bullying) you could discuss with the Local Offer working group, or indeed if working directly with your child's school, the following:



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- * Do schools recognise the increased likelihood of bullying in schools of children with SEND?
- * Do schools own bullying or behaviour management policies clearly recognise and address the additional risk and implications of bullying of children with SEND?
- * Are schools able to determine if children in their schools with SEND are able to report bullying incidents
- * How do schools respond to incidents of bullying, and are they able to consider the additional impacts of bullying on children and young people with SEND?
- * Do teachers or Sencos have any specialist training in relation to the bullying of children with SEND?
- * Are schools aware of, and accessing the free resources or training provided through the Department for Education funded SEND anti bullying alliance project?
- * Are schools aware that Anti Bullying Week 2014 will focus on the bullying of children and young people with SEND?
- * How could schools use all of the above to support the review and development of their inclusion policies, accessibility plans, and other information they are required to provide?

You could also ask your Local Safeguarding Childrens Board (LSCB) how they are meeting their duties to safeguard children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and if they are considering the additional risks that can be posed to them, as this research evidences.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION, ADVICE AND RESOURCES

Contact a Family (working with the NNPCF), the Anti Bullying Alliance, Mencap, the Council for Disabled Children and Achievement for All are part of a consortia delivering a Department for Education programme of work in relation to the bullying of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability. You can find out more information, resources, advice, and free training opportunities for parent carers, schools, and workers by going to <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/send-programme.aspx>



There will also be specific resources and lesson plans available for schools to support the delivery of anti bullying week for 2014 available from August 2014

If parent carers are concerned about bullying of their children please call our helpline on 0800 808 808 for advice and support