

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14 March 2018

DEVELOPING AN ANTI-BULLYING CHARTER FOR VOLUNTARY ADOPTION BY SCHOOLS

Report by Deputy Director, Safeguarding, Children's Social Care

Introduction

1. The paper submitted to the committee on 13th December provided information about the current local evidence and action being taken to prevent and reduce bullying in Oxfordshire. It included information about the local authority's legal obligations and how current work to address bullying meets the local vision and priorities for Children's Services. It included a brief overview of work being carried out as part of the current Anti-Bullying Strategy. The paper aimed to inform members about work to address both online and prejudice-related bullying and the specific focus on work to mitigate the impact on vulnerable groups. This paper is available at annex 1 of this report.

Anti-Bullying Charter - progress since December 2017

2. This paper outlines the progress made towards developing an Anti-Bullying Charter for voluntary adoption by schools as requested by the Education Scrutiny Committee on 13th December.
3. During January 2018, meetings took place between Jo Brown, Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator and Jo Moxon, Deputy Director (Education) and Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles (Cabinet member for Education) to discuss desired content for an Anti-Bullying Charter. Jo Brown then contacted the Anti-Bullying Alliance to request permission to adapt their ten key principles on tackling bullying to create Oxfordshire's Anti-Bullying Charter.
4. The Anti-Bullying Alliance is a nationally recognised body that promotes good practice and the content of the charter is therefore something that all schools would be likely to accept and sign up for. They are one of the main organisations signposted in the Department for Education guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" and are currently funded by the DfE to deliver the "All Together" programme to support schools to improve their Anti-Bullying practice with a focus on children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities.
5. Oxfordshire has been successful in securing DfE funding (for the 2nd year running) to be an "All Together" local authority with the provision of face to face training for both schools and children's workforce professionals (There are only 13 local authorities who have secured this funding nationally). The programme provided face to face training, free access to online resources and a well-being questionnaire to improve all aspects of Anti-Bullying practice with a focus on

the children with Special Educational needs and disabilities. This training has been attended by more than 80 Oxfordshire schools and 50 children's workforce professionals. It was therefore felt beneficial to consolidate and build on the work that Oxfordshire schools are already doing to improve their practice and policy in relation to bullying.

6. The Anti-Bullying Alliance were very keen to work in partnership with Oxfordshire and we have therefore adapted the charter, with their input and support, to include mention of online bullying and to highlight all areas of prejudice that may motivate bullying. This is to reflect the local and national evidence that indicates that a high proportion of bullying is motivated by prejudice as indicated in the earlier report attached at annex 1.
7. The content of the charter is attached at annex 1.
8. The Charter design is currently being worked on by our Communications Team and a launch event has been arranged for 28th February. The launch will take place at Chipping Norton secondary school with attendance from Jo Brown, Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator, Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles, our Communications Team, and the Head teachers or representatives from the three Chipping Norton Schools. The Anti-Bullying Charter will then be presented at the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Safeguarding in Education Sub-Group on 28th February and launched to all schools in the following weeks school news.
9. Any school will be able to contact the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator to sign up for and adopt the Anti-Bullying Charter. Schools will then be provided with a copy of the Anti-Bullying Charter to display in their reception areas to show their commitment to these key principles. This will provide a strong message to everyone in the school community. It will also provide an opportunity to signpost Oxfordshire guidance, templates and protocols to support schools to develop good practice. Some short guidance for schools to accompany the charter is currently being written by the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator
10. Schools may wish to achieve further recognition for their practice in relation to Anti-Bullying and alongside the Charter we are therefore offering an opportunity to receive the Oxfordshire Anti-Bullying Charter Mark (renewable annually) for schools that have committed to the following:
 1. Appointing an Anti-Bullying lead staff member and Anti-Bullying lead Governor.
 2. Completing an Anti-Bullying audit and having an action plan in place to prevent and tackle bullying (either the Oxfordshire [Anti-Bullying self-assessment](#) and [action plan](#) or the Anti-Bullying Alliance audit tool.
 3. Taking part in the Oxfordshire online bullying survey [Primary17-18sample](#) [Secondary17-18sample](#) (or other agreed survey e.g. the Anti-Bullying Alliance well-being survey) and using the survey to identify patterns, measure impact and inform and update the action plan.

11. Those schools who have signed up for the Anti-Bullying Alliance All Together Programme since July 2017 and who have also completed the requirements to stay on the programme would therefore be eligible to receive the Oxfordshire Anti-Bullying Charter Mark. A record will be kept of all school who sign up for the charter and this will also allow them to be added to the network for updates on Anti-Bullying and online safety and provide an opportunity to encourage them to apply for the Charter Mark.
12. The Oxfordshire Anti-Bullying Charter Mark will exist alongside the multi-level [Equality School Champion Award](#) which was developed to support schools to develop good practice in relation to preventing and tackling LGBT bullying. Our local survey found that older young people who identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender were most likely to be bullied or feel unsafe at school.

Conclusion

13. Considerable progress has been made since the request made by the Education Scrutiny Committee on 13th December. By the time the meeting goes ahead on 14th March the Oxfordshire Anti-Bullying Charter will have been launched and it is anticipated that schools will be keen to sign up and show their commitment to the Charter's principles.

Equalities Implications

14. These are discussed within the main body of the report

RECOMMENDATION

15. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the report.**

LARA PATEL

Deputy Director, Safeguarding, Children's Services

Background papers: Report to ESC on 13th December 2017; Copy of Oxfordshire Anti-Bullying Charter

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