



**GUIDE TO PREVENTING & REDUCING  
BULLYING IN THE NAVY CADET FORCE**

Produced by National Management Committee

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**NB** The title Navy Cadet Force has been shortened throughout this document to (NCF) purely to reduce costs of printing, by saving ink and paper, and thus be more environmentally friendly. This document is for internal use only.

# GUIDE TO PREVENTING & REDUCING BULLYING IN THE NAVY CADET FORCE

## **INTRODUCTION**

This guide has been written for the NCF to assist volunteers and cadets to eliminate the chances of bullying behaviour happening. It is suggested by the organisation Kidscape, ([www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)) that at some stage in life, some people have experienced a form of bullying behaviour, either by displaying behaviour or by being the victim or just being a witness to someone being bullied. With this guide we aim to support staff to recognise what is bullying behaviour and how best we as an organisation can offer support and guidance.

## **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

### **Definition of Bullying**

According to the Department of Education and Skills (DEFS) anti-bullying report 2003, bullying is said to be a deliberately hurtful behaviour that may be repeated over a period of time. It also suggests that individuals who display bullying behaviour usually target victims who find it difficult to defend themselves.

Bullying is said to be a social problem and happens in all walks of life, whether at school, work, the home or in the cadets. Bullying behaviour can take place anywhere according to the Kidscape website. Some people may say that it is just a form of 'teasing' or 'good natured fun', but if the person does not see it as such and the comments become nasty, hurtful or vicious, then it is bullying ([www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)).

Adults and cadets who display signs of bullying behaviour can come from any family regardless of social class and cultural background etc.

### **Suggested types of bullying**

- Emotional (e.g. being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting)
- Physical (e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, punching or any use of violence)
- Racist (e.g. racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments)
- Homophobic (e.g. because of, or focussing on issues of sexuality)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing)
- Cyber (e.g. all areas of the internet, such as e-mail and internal chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuses of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities).
- Name calling is the most common type of bullying that is reported, it can be because of someone's appearance, religion, gender, sexuality or disability. Some

victims can be bullied for no reason at all, as suggested by the Kidscape Anti-bullying Report 2005.

### **REASONS WHY SOME PEOPLE DISPLAY BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

There are many reasons why some people bully others. It could be a way of coping with a difficult situation, a death of a relative, family problems, victims of abuse, jealousy, they may have been bullied themselves by someone. It could also be a way of disguising their own faults.

According to the DEFS Anti-bullying Report 2003, people who display bullying behaviour are often in a position of power or authority over victims; they pick on others as a way of making life better for themselves and use intimidation to get what they want. If they realise the victim will not retaliate if attacked or insulted they will continue to make the victims life unbearable.

### **TYPES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR THAT WE MIGHT ENCOUNTER WITHIN THE NCF**

- Cadet to Cadet
- Adult to Cadet
- Adult to Adult

Even though the example list above shows the different types of bullying behaviour, they all have common factors; they cause pain and stress-related illnesses to their victims. This type of behaviour is in-appropriate and it should be dealt with in a professional manner.

- **Cadet to Cadet bullying behaviour**

This type of bullying behaviour could take the form of name calling, hitting, kicking, leaving victims out of group activities, ignoring and excluding other peers from social discussions, spreading stories, stealing their peer's possessions etc.

**What might be the reason for such behaviour?**

There could be a number of reasons, jealousy for example, one cadet performing better than another and is being recognised for it. It could also be over one's appearance, race or religion. It could also be that the young person is very vulnerable and the young person displaying the bullying behaviour might think the victim will not retaliate.

- **Adult to Cadet bullying behaviour**

There are times when an adult may single out an individual young person for no specific reason and display bullying behaviour to that young person. This could be done by verbal intimidation, targeting the cadet(s) in lessons or in training for ridicule, or it could be harsher actions or verbal comments with other cadets, physical abuse i.e. press ups etc.

**What might be the reason for adults displaying such behaviour to cadets?**

There is no reason to display such behaviour but factors that could contribute to such behaviour may be due to the lack of experience and empathy. It could also be ignorance, or the adult may have a personal dislike to the young person.

- **Adult to Adult**

There are several ways that an adult can display bullying behaviour to another adult. Examples can be a senior staff member executing their power over another staff member, being arrogant and displaying dismissive behaviour, bullying behaviour can also be of a sexual nature or harassment.

In some instances it is hard to recognise bullying behaviour with adults and this could be the result of how and when it is done thus preventing it from being recognised. In some cases, because of the nature of the bullying behaviour, the individual may be too frightened or embarrassed to report the incident.

**What might be the reason for adults displaying such behaviour?**

Reasons for displaying such behaviour are not known but it could be a number of factors, for example: they might have a personal dislike for a particular member of staff or by being arrogant and having a lack of mutual understanding.

**HOW TO RECOGNISE IF BULLYING IS HAPPENING WITHIN THE THREE DIFFERENT AREAS (CADET - CADET, ADULT – CADET, ADULT – ADULT)**

Bullying is not always easy to detect but you may be able to recognise and look out for some of the signs which may include:

- Unwillingness to join in activities, training camps, courses etc.
- Expressing that they wish to leave Cadets (either as a cadet or Adult).
- Is often the target of jokes.
- Is reluctant to go to certain places to work with certain individuals.
- Is the last one to get picked for group activities.
- Is quiet and nervous, withdraws from everybody else and becomes shy.
- Missing possessions or keeps 'losing money'.
- Becoming easily distressed.
- Refusal to talk about the problem.

The following is a list of different types of bullying behaviour that individuals might display. The list is not exhaustive but might help to categorise the type of bullying characteristics that the individual might be displaying.

- **Cruel, Selfish, Bullying Behaviour** – lacks empathy for others, has a low degree of anxiety about consequences, needs to feel powerful. May appear to have high self esteem but is actually weak.
- **Imitative Bullying Behaviour** – may have low self esteem or be depressed. Influenced by surrounding social environment.

- **Impulsive Bullying Behaviour** – will be less likely to be part of a gang, bullying will be more spontaneous and random. They would have difficulties with their behaviour.
- **Accidental Bullying Behaviour** – if bullying is deliberate, this individual might not be included. The bully might not realise their actions might be upsetting the victim.
- **Verbal Bullying Behaviour** – verbal bullies use words to hurt or humiliate other people. Verbal bullying includes name calling, insulting people, making racist comments or constant teasing. This type of bullying is the easiest to inflict on others as it is quick and to the point.
- **Stressed, Impulsive or Unintentional Bullying Behaviour** – occurs when someone is under stress or an institution is undergoing confusing, disorienting changes. This is the easiest to redirect.
- **Cyber Bullying Behaviour** – this includes hateful e-mails and cyber stalking.
- **Subordinate Bullying Behaviour** – bullying perpetrated by subordinates (such as an officer being bullied by a Senior Rate).
- **Serial Bullying Behaviour** – an individual who repeatedly intimidates or harasses one individual after another. A victim is selected and bullied for an extended period of time until he/she leaves or puts in a complaint about the bully.

## WHO IS INVOLVED IN BULLYING?

Any adult or cadet can be the bully or the victim and in some cases the victim can be the bully too. Bullying behaviour usually starts with the bully singling out an individual. They could be joined by other people who may help the bully by joining in, watching, laughing and encouraging the person displaying bullying behaviour to continue taunting the victim.

There are statistics to suggest that 20% of young people that have been bullied have been bullied by former friends. It is also suggested that three out of 4 reported cases of bullying were by a group rather than one person and 15% of young people who display bullying behaviour have been bullied by someone themselves ([www.gold.ac.uk/connect/reportuk](http://www.gold.ac.uk/connect/reportuk)).

- **The bully** can be any individual that may take a personal dislike to someone for no reason at all. The unacceptable behaviour becomes a habit. They are more likely to surround themselves with people who condone and accept their behaviour, a bully is likely to intimidate others to cover up their own insecurities and this could increase their own anxiety.
- **The victim** can be anyone; the person exhibiting bullying behaviour will find something on the victim to focus on; for example, the individual might be wearing glasses, coming from a different cultural back ground, low esteem. Shyness and many more.

- **The bystander** can be anyone who is observing the situation but may become frightened by the bully and be scared in case the bully turns on them which makes them feel helpless and guilty, or might enjoy the bullying and encourage the bully more. People who observe bullying might be scared to intervene. The bystander may not always be involved when bullying behaviour is being exhibited as some bullying behaviour happens when others are not around.

### **THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

The effects of bullying can be devastating amongst adults and cadets. Not only is it hurtful but victims may feel that it is their fault, or think that there must be something wrong with them.

Bullying can destroy people's confidence and concentration, causing them to become insecure, isolated and be very unhappy and may cause problems later on in life (DFES Anti-bullying Report 2003). Many adult who are victims of bullying may also have a lack of motivation in their work or suffer from depression which can affect their family life.

In some circumstances, bullying will cause the adult or young person to take their own life. Bullying has an effect on everyone involved, not just those involved directly. Research (Parker & Asher 1987 , Sharp 1995 Long and Short-term bullying) has shown that victims who are subjected to being bullied can experience both short and long term consequences.

### **HOW TO PREVENT/REDUCE BULLYING WITHIN THE NCF**

A single meeting or discussion about bullying will not solve the problem. In order to reduce bullying, it is important to change the social climate of the Unit and the behaviour in regards to bullying. This requires the efforts of everyone involved in the NCF environment and volunteers, cadets and parent/guardians can make a difference and should try to prevent bullying. Below are a few suggestions on how to prevent bullying:

- Give a talk at the unit at the beginning of any training weekend or event, covering issues of bullying behaviour. Also cover topics on how to support the mechanism in place and the organisation as a whole.
- Encourage adults and cadets to openly tell others.
- Suggest a named person to contact for cadets so that they have a point of contact thus allowing them to feel comfortable when they are in a new environment.
- Ask the cadets in the Unit and during camps to appoint a senior cadet or a 'cadet ambassador for bullying' to help those cadets who might be afraid to come forward.

- Assess bullying at the Unit. It is not always very easy to estimate the nature and prevalence of bullying. As a result, it may be useful to administer an anonymous questionnaire to everyone at the unit about bullying.
- Bullying prevention should not be the sole responsibility of one person.
- Consider forming and co-ordinating a Unit Bullying Prevention Team (the team should include all ranks/rates of staff and cadets). The team should meet regularly to discuss any behaviour issues and ways to motivate everyone in the Unit to ensure efforts continue over time.
- Devote some Unit teaching time to Bullying Prevention. Adults and cadets may benefit if time is set aside regularly (e.g. 20-30 minutes) every three months or so to discuss bullying and improving peer relations. These meetings could help to address and identify any concerns; allow time for discussions about bullying and the harms that it can cause. Make it clear to everyone that bullying is unacceptable.
- Dealing with and preventing adult bullying can be difficult. All staff should meet regularly and be reminded that respect amongst the group is important.
- Enforce the rule by leading by example and ensure that staff behave in a professional manner at all times. If young people see adults engaging in unacceptable behaviour, they too will think that it is acceptable to treat others in this way.
- There should be a copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy Statement visible in every Unit.

There are six straight forward points about bullying you may want to use:

- We will not bully others.
- We will try to help others who are bullied
- We will make it a point to include others who are easily left out.
- If we know someone is being bullied we will inform our point of contact immediately.
- We should all agree to abide by the Anti-bullying Policy Statement so that everybody clearly understands about the consequences of bullying.
- Continue these efforts as there should be no 'end date' for bullying prevention activities. Bullying Prevention should be continued over time and woven into the fabric of the Unit's environment.

### **HOW CAN YOU OFFER SUPPORT TO THE VICTIM?**

Adults and cadets must feel confident that they are able to approach a member of staff with their complaint and that it is dealt with in a professional manner.

- Should an adult or cadet report that they are being bullied; the most important thing that must be done is to listen. A sympathetic adult or senior cadet can offer



so much support just by listening. Also as an individual you must be comfortable with dealing with the situation if in doubt, it is advised that with the approval from the individual the information is passed on to another adult that is able to deal with, and support, the victim.

- Speak to the individual about how they would want you to deal with the issue discussed; they may not be ready to do anything other than talk about how they are feeling. Many people who are subjected to being bullied often do not report bullying because they fear others taking over and act unilaterally without their permission. Make sure that you discuss what you are going to do and get their agreement.
- All forms of bullying must be reported in line with the NCF Policy Statement.
- If an adult is being bullied by their superior, we advise that they go to the next superior authority in the chain of command.
- We recommend that a log is kept with details of incident times and places. It is advisable to encourage people at all times to keep records to support their statement.
- Reassure adults and cadets that being bullied is never their choice and never their fault. Try to help to gain back their self esteem.

## **HOW YOU CAN HELP THE INDIVIDUAL WHO IS EXHIBITING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

People exhibiting bullying behaviour need help and support too. If you are able to help adults and cadets change their behaviour, so that they can behave in a manner that is not intimidating to others, they might start feeling good themselves.

### **Advice for anyone exhibiting bullying behaviour**

- Find out from the individual, if they know why and how they are bullying others.
- Find out if the individual recognises the pain bullying can cause, or if they really want to hurt or upset people.
- You need to point out to the individual that they need to recognise that it is not big to make others feel horrible.
- Offer advice to the individual and tell them that they need to recognise that bullying others will not gain them any real friends.
- Suggest to the individual that they need to ask for help to stop bullying others – advise the individual to also try talking to an adult or a friend they trust.

## **Advice on how to deal with people exhibiting bullying behaviour**

- Inform adults and young people that bullying (verbal and physical) is not tolerated in the NCF. Everyone is expected to ensure that it does not happen and has responsibility to report it.
- Whether in Units, in a training environment or having fun, have the young people discuss bullying behaviour and discuss what the best way to handle such behaviour is.
- Consider suggesting to the cadets that they produce their own Unit guide for dealing with bullying behaviour.
- Another good suggestion is to have the young people make up rules for behaviour in their Units.
- Encourage the cadets to suggest possible solutions for dealing with bullying behaviour.
- Have the cadets discuss ways to assist individual or individuals displaying bullying behaviour.
- If bullying is happening, find out the facts, talk to the person(s) exhibiting the bullying behaviour and victim(s) individually. Consider calling in parents/guardians, ask their suggestions and solicit their support.
- If necessary break up the group dynamics by assigning places, keeping individuals behind to discuss the incident etc with documentation to support. Most groups that exhibit bullying behaviour have a leader as suggested by the DEFS Anti-bullying Report 2003. Try and turn peer pressure against bullying behaviour and break up groups.
- Try and offer as much support as possible to young people with the aim of helping them to be assertive. For example, there are samples of suggestions using programmes such as Kidscape.
- Celebrate and encourage young people and adults for their individuality.

## **ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT**

The following organisations may be able to offer additional advice and help for those adult volunteers and cadets who have been subjected to bullying. Advice is also available to those who are displaying bullying behaviour.

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk) has lots of up-to-date information and help. Victims or bullies can talk to professional advisors online who can help them there and then.

[www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying) 'Don't suffer in silence' information regarding bullying can be downloaded from the website.

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) Kidscape produces leaflets and booklets on bullying, and runs a helpline – Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm on 020 7730 3300

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) Young people can call ChildLine free from Monday to Friday 3.30pm – 9.30pm. To read more about bullying please visit the ChildLine website.

### References

1. Bullying Report 2003 – department of Education and Skills
2. Dealing with Bullying and Bullies – Kidscape 2007
3. Peersupport.co.uk – 2001
4. Tackling Violence in Schools – Helen Cowie, Dawn Jennifer & Sonia Sharp – 2001

### Acknowledgements

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**The Responsibility of this Policy falls to the Colonel of the Navy Cadet Force.**

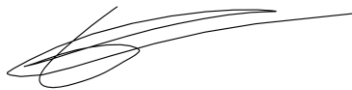


**Signed:**

**Date: January 2023**

**Print: Colonel Terry Fitzgerald**

**This Policy has been approved for distribution by the Chairman of the Navy Cadet Force.**



**Signed:**

**Date: January 2023**

**Print: Luke Giles**