

Outline

CHAT Room (Come Here And Talk)

ETHOS network ANTI-BULLYING NETWORK March 2002



SCHOOL → Kinneil Primary School

FOCUS → Peer Support

What initiatives are in place to reduce bullying?

The CHAT (Come Here And Talk) Room is staffed by parent volunteers. It is available during lunchtime on three days each week. Pupils can go to the parent volunteers to be listened to, and parent volunteers can attempt to help in situations brought to their attention by giving constructive advice, or by bringing the situation to the attention of the school staff. All incidents reported to the parent volunteers are recorded and referred to the school managers.

Kinneil Primary School also run a 'Playfair' initiative. This initiative uses Playzones in the playground to provide constructive play. As part of the 'Playfair' initiative, P6 children have been trained as monitors and work with the playground supervisors and parent volunteers from the CHAT room.

How are these initiatives being monitored and evaluated?

Questionnaires are used to evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of the CHAT room and the 'Playfair' initiatives.

The headteacher of Kinneil Primary also has regular meetings with volunteers and supervisory staff. All incidents reported to the parent volunteers in the CHAT room are recorded and referred to the school managers. Also, a parent meeting is planned to discuss the CHAT room and 'Playfair' initiative.

What are some of the biggest challenges faced by teachers in implementing these initiatives?

- * Conflict of values; parents and pupils do not always share the school's values
- * Aggression in boys and increasingly amongst girls.
- * Pupils' difficulties in finding and implementing appropriate strategies to deal with verbal aggression/ name-calling.
- * Interpretations of 'bullying'.
- * Over the top media presentation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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The Outline series provides an opportunity for members of school communities to describe good practice. An opportunity to participate in the series is offered to schools presenting workshops at Network events.

What worked well?

The CHAT room has had a good response from the children. The pupils like the CHAT room, and this has been recorded at the Pupil Council meetings. The 'Playfair' initiative needs to be in place for a longer time before it can be evaluated, but it should have a positive impact. Generally parents welcome both the initiatives, and both initiatives assist teachers in settling minor disputes.

What did not work and lessons learned?

Reporting incidents to CHAT room parent volunteers is helping children initially, but is not helping to stop aggressive behaviour as much as was hoped. The focus has to be on P.S.D. and especially playground actions. Also, personality clashes amongst adult volunteers have been an added challenge.

Future plans?

Parent volunteers will receive in-service training on positive play, and will also attend courses on counselling. PSD issues will be worked on more intensively both in school and at playtimes. There will be a parents meeting to encourage parents to be involved in the initiatives and to share the underlying values of the initiatives.

Materials the school is willing to share.

Kinneil Primary school are happy to share the proformas used in the CHAT room, and the questionnaires used to monitor and evaluate the CHAT room and the 'Playfair' initiative.