# Peer Mentoring - anti bullying: Draft Scope for scrutiny review

## Purpose of the review
- To establish how schools encourage and sustain peer mentoring networks to support their anti-bullying work

## Anticipated outcome(s)
- Establish if peer mentoring schemes make a difference to tackling anti-bullying in Rotherham schools (from a school and young person's perspective);
- An understanding how such schemes work in practice in Rotherham (prevalence and effectiveness) and the role of different agencies;
- Establish if there are any barriers which prevent schools adopting a peer mentoring scheme;
- Explore if there are low-cost/ no-cost solutions to help make peer mentoring schemes sustainable in the longer term

## Background
As part of the 11 million takeover day (2011) members of the Youth Cabinet asked for scrutiny to look at how schools encourage and sustain peer support networks to support anti-bullying work in schools.

Schools, academies and colleges have statutory responsibilities with regard to bullying. This is covered in legislation which includes the Children Act 1989, the Education Act 2002 (giving schools a duty to “safeguard and promote the welfare” of pupils), the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (giving headteachers the responsibility for “preventing all forms of bullying” including inappropriate offsite behaviour) and the Equality Act 2010. The key document is the Department for Education’s (DfE) “Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies” published in 2011, and alongside this its “Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance”. Anti-bullying policy and practice must be developed in relationship to the school's Behaviour Policy and be consistent with it.

The new Ofsted framework which came into force in January 2012, includes ‘behaviour and safety’ as one of its key criteria for inspections. Schools should be able to demonstrate the impact of anti-bullying policies.

RMBC has supported action to address bullying in schools over many years. An Anti-Bullying Officer (term-time only) was recruited in 2005/06 who has supported the development of policies in schools and has directly supported victims and their families.

Alongside the development of policies, the Anti-Bullying Officer has worked with students to establish student-led peer support schemes. There is consistent evidence that young people who have experienced peer mentoring demonstrate higher levels of satisfaction with life in general, increased self-esteem, improved peer relationships and become happier at school as a result. (National Peer Mentoring Anti-Bullying Pilot 2008-10). Though no longer Government policy, the 2007, Safe to Learn guidelines looks at how to embed anti-bullying work in schools, using creative approaches (including peer mentoring).

Safe Havens is a student founded and led scheme that works with approximately 5 out of the 16 secondary schools in Rotherham (2013). The scheme has received national recognition for the work it has undertaken in schools (Anti-Bullying Alliance) and is a previous winner of the national ‘Diana Award’ as an ambassador for anti-bullying work. It is understood that in addition to Safe Havens, a small number of schools operate their own peer mentoring schemes run on similar principles to other established projects (tbc).

Safe Havens recruits volunteers in each school who provide practical and emotional support to
children and young people who are at risk of or are being bullied. Each student volunteer receives training to support their work with their fellow students. These activities are undertaken in their own time. The scheme operates with the support of the Senior Leadership in Schools and is often built into the Personal, Health, Social and Economic (PHSE) curriculum.

There is no specific coordinator for the Safe Haven’s project, with a core group of students undertaking key tasks including record keeping and publicity. This has meant that it has become more difficult to administer the scheme and maintain progress, particularly as core members move on to higher education or employment. This may undermine the sustainability of the project in the longer term. It is not known how the other peer mentoring schemes are supported (?

**NOTE:** A previous scrutiny review undertaken in 2006 by the former Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel examined what strategies need to be put in place to tackle school-based bullying. This work would complement the work undertaken by this review to identify what measures should be taken to improve the support available to children and young people who have been/are bullied. It is not proposed to revisit the focus of the previous in-depth review as part of this exercise.

### Key questions

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<th>How effective are the current schemes – from a school and young person’s perspective?</th>
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<td>How can this be evidenced?</td>
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<td>How many schools operate peer mentoring schemes in Rotherham?</td>
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<td>How are young people involved and supported peer mentoring schemes?</td>
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<td>What is the role of other partner services (for example Young People’s Service. School Improvement)?</td>
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<td>Are there low-cost/ no-cost solutions to help make peer mentoring schemes sustainable in the longer term?</td>
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<td>Are there any barriers to schools adopting a peer mentoring scheme and if so, what practical (low/no cost) support can be offered to overcome these?</td>
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### What is the potential impact of the review on

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<th>Residents</th>
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<td>Equality issues eg access to services, vulnerable groups</td>
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<td>Health inequalities</td>
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<td>Adding value to the organisation</td>
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<td>Partners</td>
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<td>Any other key groups?</td>
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- Schools, colleges and academies are responsible under the Equality Act 2010 for eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act. They must advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Bullying can lead to long term damage to emotional and mental well-being if left unaddressed

- Links to safeguarding and well-being.

- Children, young people and families partnership

### Links to the council’s corporate plan

**Ensuring care and protection are available for those people who need it most: All children in Rotherham are safe**

### Methodology

To be determined
Proposed that this is a **spotlight** undertaken in a half day session
Members to agree if meeting is to be conducted by full commission or smaller sub-group

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| Key background papers | Department for Education (2012) - Preventing and tackling bullying: Schools' accountability
NSPCC Safeguarding in Education Service Briefing: Roles and responsibilities of schools, academies and colleges in England for tackling bullying (April 2012)
http://www.safehavens.org.uk/
Anti-Bullying Alliance Case Study – Safe Havens http://www.anti-bullyingalliancetoolkit.org.uk/docs/ABA%20Case%20StudyYORKS%20and%20HUMBER%20Safe%20Havens%20Rotherham.doc
National Peer Mentoring Anti-Bullying Pilot 2008-10
other sources of information to be determined |

| Evidence to be provided by | Members of the Safe Havens’ core group/Youth Cabinet
Senior Leaders from schools operating Safe Havens (or alternative)
Senior Leaders: Children and Young People’s Services
Cllr Paul Lakin
Anti-Bullying Officer
Anti-Bullying Alliance representative
Survey of School Councils
other sources of evidence to be determined |

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<th>Date of meeting</th>
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| Reporting mechanism | Improving Lives Select Commission
OSMB
Cabinet |