

The NSPCC's purpose is to end cruelty to children.
Our vision is of a society where all children are loved,
valued and able to fulfil their potential.

We seek to achieve cultural, social and political change
– influencing legislation, policy, practice, attitudes
and behaviours and delivering services for the benefit
of children and young people

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Checkpoints for young people

Better behaviour for better learning
by George Varnava

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Photography by Jon Challicom, posed by models.
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NSPCC TM
Cruelty to children must stop. **FULL STOP.**

About the author

George Varnava is London Consultant for the Anti-Bullying Alliance, a founder member of the UK Observatory for the Promotion of Non-Violence and Trustee of two charitable bodies: The Suzy Lamplugh Trust and Rainer. He is author of *Checkpoints* and *How to Stop Bullying* (David Fulton Publishers) and former Chairman of the BBC Secondary Programmes Committee.

"We don't need to sit here talking about it, chatting about it. We need to get action now! And if we don't this is going to carry on and if it carries on this world is not going to be a nice place".

**Seven year-old Joanne speaking
in circle time about bullying**

Name
School
Class/Form
Teacher/Tutor

Introduction

To young people at school: these *Checkpoints* are for you. They are based on the many suggestions made by young people of your age and can be used as a guide, together with *Checkpoints for schools* if you choose, towards a safer and happier school life.

Some facts

Violence hurts. It can hurt your body and your feelings. People do not have to be violent. They learn to be violent, usually when they are children.

- Up to six out of ten young people are bullied at some time.
- Most children are smacked, usually at home.
- In nine out of ten cases when there is violence between adults at home, there are children who see or hear it. *Checkpoints* can help to draw everyone's attention to the problems of aggression, bullying and violence. They suggest what can be done to prevent unacceptable behaviour and can be used at home or at school.

Most important: Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child gives you “the right to express the views you have and for your views to be listened to in anything that affects you”. So speak up!

Using Checkpoints

You can use *Checkpoints* by yourself, with friends, at home or with the Student Council. If you don't know any answer, ask someone to help you find out. Read each item and tick either yes or no. Then, using the web on page 14, starting at the middle, shade in each section where you have answered yes.

You will then have a diagram which shows how far action has already been taken to improve behaviour. It will also show which areas still need action. You can also add your own suggestions in Checkpoint 7. To get the best out of *Checkpoints* it helps if you make your own statement about what you want to achieve.

For example:

“I want to belong to a violence-free community”

My statement:



Checkpoint 1

**Home, school and community
– in school and out of school**

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I take part in making the rules on behaviour. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. The rules apply to all of us, children and adults including visitors. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I know what happens when any rule is broken. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. The Home/School Contract deals with non-violence and says how violence can be avoided both in and out of school. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. We work with people from the local community to find ways of preventing violence. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Checkpoint 2

Values – what we believe in

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. We all want the school to be a safe, happy place. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Everyone is expected to respect oneself and others. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Adults set an example of good behaviour. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. We all have a say in making the Code of Conduct. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. We are encouraged and helped to work together. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Checkpoint 3

Organisation – how the school works

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I know who to speak to if I am bullied, called names or hurt in any way. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Ways of stopping violence are discussed regularly by the School Council. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. The school puts money towards preventing unacceptable behaviour. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. The rules on behaviour are explained in full to every newcomer. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Other rules also make it clear that good behaviour is expected always. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Checkpoint 4

Environment – where I work and play

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. My school is a friendly place, clean and cared for. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I am involved in helping to look after the school environment. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. There are comfortable places indoors and outside for me to enjoy during breaks. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Overcrowding on school premises is avoided. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. There is a place for me to keep my belongings safe. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Checkpoint 5

Curriculum – learning about violence and how to prevent it

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I learn why violence happens and how I can avoid it. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Examples of non-violent behaviour are set, as in sport, where there are rules and a referee. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Teachers remind me about both my rights and my responsibilities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. There are extra activities put on at breaks and after school. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. We study examples of violence in TV, video and advertising to help us understand the harm caused by violence. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Checkpoint 6

Training – practising what I have learned

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I know that I have the right to give my opinion on any matter that affects me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I learn about violence through drama and role-play and what might follow violence. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I learn how to stop anger or an argument leading to violence. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I understand that adults can be bullies too and that bullying is always wrong. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I learn that using violence is never the right way to get what I want. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Checkpoint 7

Other suggestions – what I would like to add to Checkpoints 1 to 6

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

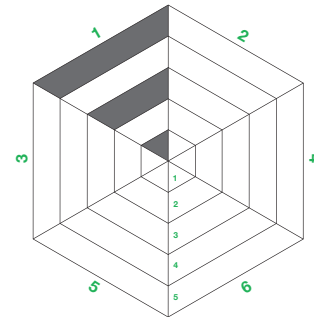


The Checkpoints web

The web represents six aspects or Checkpoints of your school:

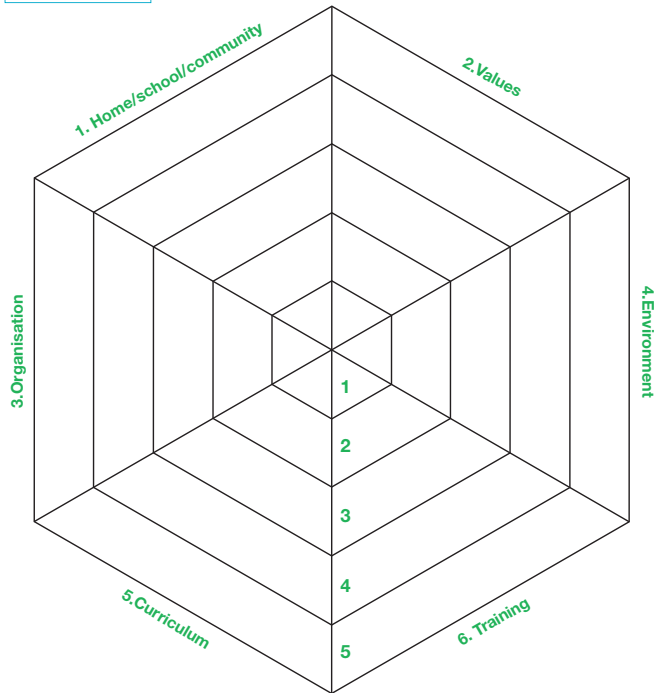
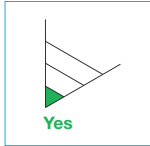
1. Home/school/community
2. Values
3. Organisation
4. Environment
5. Curriculum
6. Training.

Once you have read and ticked each statement for either **yes** or **no**, transfer your answers to the web starting from the middle, shading in the yes answers. For example, if you answered yes to statements 1, 3 and 5 in Checkpoint 1, then the diagram would look like this:



The web now shows how far your school has reached in dealing with unacceptable behaviour and where further action could be taken.

Shading key



If you are worried it is always best to talk to a parent, a teacher or a friend. You can also call the NSPCC's free 24 hour helpline...

0808 800 5000

Violence is not the right solution (charter)

Checkpoints for schools and *Checkpoints for young people* were originally commissioned by the Forum on Children and Violence with the support of the National Children's Bureau and funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

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