

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock



Addressing Bullying Policy

Statutory Context and Guidance

It is a duty placed on Boards of Governors in Northern Ireland to ensure the school has an effective Addressing Bullying Policy and practices aligned to the Addressing Bullying in Schools (NI) Act 2016 which commenced in schools in September 2021. This Addressing Bullying Policy takes account of key legislation and is informed by DE Guidance, EA publications and the international context (see Appendix 1).

Policy Details

Legal Status	Adopted	Version Date	Last Review	Next Review	Responsible
Statutory	13 th January 2025	January 2025	December 2021	January 2029	Ms McCarthy

Consultation took place with students, parents/carers and staff in January 2025.

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with Child Protection and Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the wider suite of Pastoral Care policies available on the College website or from Reception on request. These policies are listed in Section 1.4.

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SECTION 1

1. Statutory Context and Guidance

1.1 Introduction

In Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock we acknowledge that bullying-type behaviour exists in schools and wider society and can impact on the lives, mental health and well-being of those involved. This policy aims to help create, maintain and embed a culture where everyone agrees that bullying-type behaviour is unacceptable.

In Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock we believe that safeguarding our students is paramount and the responsibility of all stakeholders. We promote a safe, inclusive and relational school environment where concerns of bullying-type behaviour may be shared and addressed, and where students are supported within the context of Article 19 Measures to Prevent Bullying, Education (NI) 2003 and the 2016 Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) (see Appendix 1).

1.2 The Purpose of this Policy is to:

- define bullying-type behaviour
- summarise rights, roles and responsibilities
- explain preventative measures
- clarify processes used for reporting, recording, and responding
- outline monitoring and review processes

This policy is applied where concerns of alleged bullying-type behaviour between students have been reported. For other concerns regarding bullying-type behaviours please refer to the College Complaints Procedure or associated policies which are aligned (DE Circular 2016/08: Public Services Ombudsman (NI) Act).

1.3 Ethos and Values

'Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock cares for young people in a way that encourages them to develop to their full potential within a supportive Christian community. We seek to prepare our students to play an active and responsible role in society, and to use their talents for the service of others.'

We acknowledge that every individual in the College is worthy of unconditional respect. We recognise the right of every individual to be educated and to educate in a safe and caring environment. We seek to uphold that right and to provide such an environment for students and staff alike.

Our six key values are: Care, Honesty, Respect, Inclusion, Safety and Trust.

We, in Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock, recognise the uniqueness of every student and celebrate the diversity of all children and young people within our community. Therefore:

- We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying-type behaviour.
- We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity.
- We are committed to a preventative, relational and restorative ethos.
- We value, respect and consider the views and contributions of children, young people and the wider school community.

1.4 Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with Child Protection and Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the wider suite of Pastoral Care policies available on the College website or from Reception on request. These policies include but are not limited to:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct for All Staff and Volunteers
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Attendance Policy for Students
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- eSafety and Digital Technology Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

It also reflects Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (09/03/21).

1.5 Consultation

We value and respect the views and contributions of our College community. Therefore, as part of this policy development and review, and in compliance with Article 19 of the 2003 Education (NI) Order and the 2016 Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI), we have consulted with students, parents/carers and staff.

- Student consultation involved: sharing of draft policy, feedback from School Councils, survey/questionnaire, focus groups, PASS data, sharing of EA ABSIT Post-Primary Student Guide.
- Parents/Carers consultation involved: sharing of draft policy, survey/questionnaire, focus group (PTA), sharing of EA ABSIT Parent Guide.
- Staff consultation involved: sharing of draft policy, survey/questionnaire, focus group.

SECTION 2

2. What is Bullying-Type Behaviour?

2.1 Legal Definition of Bullying - The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which **must** be used by all schools to assess reported concerns of bullying-type behaviour.

(1) *“Bullying includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—*

- (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,*
- (b) any other act, or*
- (c) any combination of those,*

by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.”

(2) *For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.*

2.2 TRIP

While the legal definition, as set out in the Act, is the primary definition, we also use the mnemonic **TRIP**. This helps to build a shared understanding across our College community of the difference between socially unacceptable behaviour and bullying-type behaviour.

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying-type behaviour when, after clarifying facts and perceptions, **TRIP** is confirmed:

T	When the behaviour is TARGETED at a specific student or group of students.
R	When the behaviour is REPEATED over time.
I	When the behaviour is deliberately INTENDED to cause harm.
P	When the behaviour causes PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL and/or PHYSICAL harm.

While an ‘imbalance of power’ has not been included in the legal definition, the Board of Governors has agreed to incorporate this criterion to help determine if bullying-type behaviour was **targeted**. An ‘imbalance of power’ is present when **someone seen with lesser power** is identified as an object of negative attention. It will be used to validate and confirm the final TRIP decision.

Although incidents usually involve **repetition**, a **one-off incident may be** classified as bullying-type behaviour through consideration of the following criteria:

- severity and significance of the incident (see Appendices 4-5)
- evidence of pre-meditation
- psychological/physical impact of the incident on the individuals and/or wider College community
- previous relationship(s) between those involved
- any previous incident(s) involving the individuals

The 2016 Act requires schools to consider whether a student(s) **intended** to cause harm when determining if the incident(s) meets the legal definition. In the College, we will consider the following when assessing **TRIP**:

The student's/students':

- capacity to regulate and understand the impact of their behaviour
- developmental age
- additional, educational, special, physical or medical needs
- behaviours displayed/presenting profile (diagnosed or undiagnosed e.g. Social Behaviour Emotional Wellbeing, Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Moderate Learning Difficulties, etc.)
- individual circumstances e.g. trauma profile, safeguarding concerns, family circumstances and resilience

Omission will be considered when addressing bullying-type concerns. This is where a student is or students are wilfully excluded from a game, activity or group work, etc. causing potential **psychological harm**. Students do not have to be friends in the College, but friendly.

2.3 Language

We recognise that all behaviour is communication and should be addressed through a learner-centred lens for those who display *and* experience socially unacceptable or bullying-type behaviour. We will address all behaviour in a relational, solution-focused manner aligned to Safeguarding and SEND.

When discussing allegations of bullying-type behaviour, we use language that is aligned to the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, and other relevant legislation and guidance (see Appendix 1). We refer to the behaviour, not the student, and use the following:

- **Student displaying bullying-type behaviour** rather than the 'bully'.
- **Student experiencing bullying-type behaviour** rather than the 'victim'.
- **Socially unacceptable behaviour** rather than 'bad behaviour' or 'serious/gross misconduct, etc.'

Any incident which does not meet the legal definition and TRIP criteria will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour, Special Educational Needs, Child Protection/Safeguarding, Pastoral Care or Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy. (Please see the ABSIT Parent and Student Guides in Appendices 7 and 8).

2.4 Journey To and From School

The Act outlines a statutory requirement for schools to implement measures to prevent and address bullying-type behaviour for students whilst travelling **to and from school**. To this end, in the College we:

- Address safeguarding concerns reported in relation to travel to and from school.
- Provide timely support and intervention.
- Assign staff to support a structured, supervised transition at the beginning and end of the school day – teachers undertake supervision duties in the morning and bus supervision at the end of the school day.
- Reinforce positive and upstanding behaviour expectations through the preventative curriculum.
- Engage with the Student Voice about experiences on the journey to and from school.
- Promote and develop a culture where all students respect the rights of others to travel safely.

- Use Bus Prefects to monitor behaviour on the bus and be responsible for liaising with specific members of staff if an issue arises.
- Communicate consistently the expectation to include and respect individual rights and diversity.
- Ensure effective communication with transport providers (e.g. Translink, EA Transport, etc.) for early identification and response to reported concerns.
- Provide reporting mechanisms for the College and the local community to report concerns confidentially (e.g. Bullying Concern Box, Well-being Hub).
- Addressing Bullying Mentors run a timetabled Well-being Hub at breaktime in the Junior Library from October-May. Issues which may arise travelling to/from school can be reported to these students at this time.

2.5 Electronic Communication

The Addressing Bullying in Schools (NI) Act enables schools to take steps to help prevent and address online bullying-type behaviour involving registered students during term time. We acknowledge that negative online behaviour, occurring either in or out of school hours, can harm a student's education and emotional well-being, and we will support affected individuals. In Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock, we are committed to supporting our students to use the Internet safely, responsibly and respectfully.

The Addressing Bullying Policy is one of several school policies that address electronic behaviour and are reviewed in response to technological developments. As such, follow-up is aligned to the wider policy suite (see Section 1.4).

In Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock, we aim to prevent electronic bullying-type behaviour by:

- Addressing key themes of electronic online behaviour and risk through curriculum content.
- Engaging with statutory and voluntary sector agencies and resources (e.g. Safeguarding Board NI, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safer Schools App) to support the promotion of key messages and online safe digital use.
- Participating in Safer Electronic/Online/Cyber Campaigns to promote key messages.
- Addressing reported safeguarding concerns in relation to the misuse of electronic communication and providing timely support and intervention.
- Creating, agreeing and implementing Acceptable Use Agreements (see DE Circular 2016/27).
- Ensuring all staff regularly have online safety training.
- Implementation of the Safer Schools App (all students have been instructed to download the app on their mobile device).

SECTION 3

3. Methods and Motivations of Socially Unacceptable or Bullying-Type Behaviour

3.1 Methods

The following are methods of socially unacceptable behaviours which, when **targeted, repeated, intentional** and causing **psychological/physical** harm, may be considered as bullying-type behaviour:

Physical Acts	Physical - negative physical contact, material harm such as damaging or taking possessions without permission
Verbal or Written Acts	Verbal or written - unpleasant comments, written, verbal, gestures
Social/Relational	Negatively influencing the actions of others to cause psychological or physical harm
Omission (Exclusion)	Excluding someone/others from e.g. game, activity, group work, etc.
Electronic Acts	Misuse of online platforms or other electronic communications to cause psychological upset

(Please note the list is not exhaustive)

3.2 Motivations

The College acknowledges various motivations for bullying-type behaviour which we address through our preventative curriculum and responsive approaches. This includes all identity or prejudice motivated bullying-type behaviour related to those characteristics protected through Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Motivations include but are not limited to:

- Ability
- Age
- Appearance
- Child Looked After (CLA)/Care experienced
- Community background
- Cultural
- Disability
- Family circumstances (pregnancy, marital status, young carer status)
- Economic Status/FSM
- Gender/Gender identity/Perceived Gender
- Newcomer/Migrant Status
- Peer relationship breakdown
- Political affiliation/sectarianism
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- SEN

SECTION 4

4. Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 All Members of Our School Community

In the College, we believe that all members of our school community have the right to be educated in a safe, supportive learning environment. We acknowledge that all members of our community have a role to play and responsibility to prevent and address bullying-type behaviour.

4.2 Staff with Specific Responsibility

The following staff have been assigned specific responsibility within their role for oversight of the implementation of the Addressing Bullying Policy and associated practices aligned to Safeguarding and SEND legislation. They will support the Principal and the Board of Governors with the ongoing review processes and complete the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) as outlined below.

STEP 1 BCAF PART 1 and 2 Student, parent, member of staff or other	Concern is raised by a student, parent, member of staff or other.	Member of staff receiving concern listens and shares concern with Tutor/HOY. HOY will record details on BCAF Part 1. BCAF uploaded to Private Folder 6
STEP 2 BCAF PART 1 and 2 Head of Year (HOY), Head of School (HOS)	HOY/HOS review information to assess the allegation against the legal definition/criteria - TRIP/One-off incident	HOY in consultation with HOS complete BCAF Part 1 and 2 and record follow-up evidence (can be taken from CPOMs). BCAF uploaded to Private Folder 6 and decision is confirmed that the <u>legal definition/criteria have/have not been met</u> . Relevant Addressing Bullying Policy implemented and supports initiated by HOY/HOS.
STEP 3 BCAF PART 3 Head of Year (HOY), Head of School (HOS), Pastoral Support Co. (PSC), Learning Support Team (LST), students, parents and/or other agencies.	BCAF shared with Pastoral Team (PSC/HOY/HOS/LST). <u>Incidents identified as bullying-type behaviour</u> requiring interventions and support. BCAF3 completed and uploaded to PF6 and monitored by Pastoral Team (PSC/HOY/HOS/LST).	Interventions and support mapped out, recorded and reviewed using BCAF Part 3a and b. Please note that <u>this will involve students, parents and may also involve multi-agency support</u> . Restorative work may also be needed, provided by Pastoral Team/PSC. BCAF uploaded to Private Folder 6.
STEP 4 BCAF PART 4 Head of Year (HOY), Head of School (HOS), Pastoral Support Co. (PSC), Learning Support Team (LST), Vice Principal (Pastoral Care), Principal, Board of Governors, and/or other agencies.	Pastoral Team (PSC/HOY/HOS/LST/VP/Principal) review actions to date and, in collaboration, determine if success criteria from Part 3a and b have been met.	If success criteria have been met, complete section 4b of review documentation and involve further multi-agency input. Keep Board of Governors updated - no need for Board of Governors' involvement unless it comes as a complaint. BCAF uploaded to Private Folder 6.

SECTION 5

5. Preventative Measures

5.1 Approaches Taken by the College to Help Prevent Bullying-type Behaviour Effectively

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 requires schools to focus on preventative measures to help reduce bullying-type behaviours. The focus of this section is to set out the approaches taken by the College to help prevent bullying-type behaviour effectively.

In Our Lady and St. Patrick's College, Knock we scaffold and promote a positive, relational learning environment where all members of the school community feel safe, included and valued. Our preventative measures help avoid bullying-type behaviour and contribute to support plans for students. They are evident in all domains of school life and include, but are not limited to:

Whole School	Classroom
• Child Protection and Safeguarding, Pastoral Care, Attendance, Positive Behaviour Policy, eSafety and Digital Technology, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs Policy and Relationships and Sexuality Education Policies • Visible school ethos e.g. essential agreements, displays, visual cues, celebrations, positive expectations • Positively framed, agreed and communicated Rights, Roles & Responsibilities for all school community members • Peer/Student Leadership Teams • Adults modelling self-regulation, inclusive language and positive relationships • Restorative Practice approaches embedded through staff training and complementary resources • Implementing DE and EA policies on Health and Well-being through use of the Take 5 programme • Trauma Informed and Nurture Principles • Celebration of diversity, equity and inclusion • Parent education e.g. workshops, newsletters, leaflets, etc. • Shared education projects, events, assemblies, key campaigns e.g. Rights Respecting School, Kindness Awards, Anti-Bullying Week • Well-being assessment data e.g. GL/PASS • Assemblies delivered to all year groups during Anti-Bullying Week - focus on TRIP guidance to identify bullying-type behaviour • Odd Socks Day	• SEND, Addressing Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Safeguarding, Pastoral Care, Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policies • Curriculum: PDMU/LLW/RSE • Structured tutor group/class-meeting time to promote belonging, connection and positive relationships • Cross-curricular activities • eSafety and digital citizenship • Social Emotional Learning • Circle-time/connect and nurture strategies • Physical/sensory environment regulation checklists • Relevant literature and resourcing exploring related concepts and themes e.g. empathy, inclusion, diversity, problem-solving, relationships, resilience, etc. • Social thinking/skills training programmes • Friendship Education • Strengths Based Approaches • Collaborative Learning/Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution • Bystander/Upstander Education • Agile groupings and seating arrangements • Online apps and resources • Anti-Bullying Workshops - Year 10

Non-Classroom	Peer Support
• Supervision and transition arrangements e.g. including buses • Peer mentoring • Social and extra-curricular opportunities • Professional Development/Training (including for support and supervision staff) • Play/art and other therapeutic approaches • Designated safe/quiet/reflective/nurture/activity zoned spaces - Harmony Room • Enhanced structure during unstructured times e.g. breakfast club, jobs, lunchtime clubs, homework clubs • Structures to facilitate reporting concerns e.g. Well-being Hub facilitated by Addressing Bullying Mentors, Bullying Concern Box, etc.	• Student Leadership e.g. Student Voice Representatives, Student Council Representatives, Addressing Bullying Mentors, Year 8-9 Mentors, Years 8-12 Prefects, Subject Mentors, GSA Committee members, Well-being sub-committee of the Student Council, Prefects, etc. • Students trained and supported by staff regarding roles, responsibilities • Peer mentoring programme • Student-led/directed extra-curricular activities • Peer Mentoring • College Friends • Bystander/Upstander Training • Well-being Hub

5.2 **Professional Development of Staff**

In Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock we recognise the need for effective, updated and ongoing training for all staff within our preventative measures. As such, we are committed to:

- ensuring that all staff and Governors complete relevant Safeguarding, Child Protection, SEND and Addressing Bullying in Schools training, including those provided by the Education Authority.
- reviewing and amending the content of the Addressing Bullying Policy, following training, complex case review or as directed by the Department of Education.
- keeping and regularly updating continued professional development records.

To this end,

- All our teaching and support staff have completed the EA Addressing Bullying in Schools foundation training as part of this policy review.
- Key leadership staff have completed EA Addressing Bullying in Schools leadership training.

SECTION 6

6. Statutory Systems and Processes for Reporting, Responding and Recording

6.1 Reporting a Concern of Bullying-type Behaviour

As a school, we recognise that reporting a concern of bullying-type behaviour can be difficult. For this reason, we have systems in place to enable students, parents and any other person to share concerns discreetly and efficiently with a trusted adult. All concerns of bullying-type behaviour will be responded to in line with legislative processes as outlined in this policy.

6.2 Students Reporting a Concern of Bullying-type Behaviour

Students may report bullying-type concerns in the following ways:

- Verbally sharing with a staff member
- Writing a note to a staff member
- Sending an email to a teacher
- Placing the concern in the 'Bullying Concern Box'
- Speaking to Addressing Bullying Mentors in the Junior Library at the Well-being Hub

All students are encouraged to share concerns regarding socially unacceptable or bullying-type behaviour that they experience, display or witness. They should not view this as 'telling' but rather 'talking about concerns' with the emphasis on 'getting help'.

6.3 Parents/Carers or Others Reporting a Concern of Bullying-type Behaviour

In the first instance, parents/carers or others report concerns to their child's Tutor in one of the following ways:

- Speaking with the Tutor through agreed channels e.g. by requesting a telephone call back via Reception or general email at info@knock.co.uk
- Writing a note to the Tutor
- Sending an email to the Tutor

Should you continue to have concerns following contact with your child's Tutor, please contact the Head of Year/Head of School/Pastoral Support Coordinator/Vice Principal/Principal (stepped response).

6.4 Staff Reporting a Concern of Bullying-type Behaviour

In the first instance, teaching and support staff (including classroom assistants, lunchtime supervisors, administrative staff, etc.) should also report any concerns directly to the child's Tutor in a timely manner as above.

6.5 Responding to and Recording a Bullying-type of Behaviour Concern

It is the responsibility of all staff (including teaching and support staff) to report any bullying-type behaviour concerns. All allegations of bullying-type behaviour will be responded to using the Statutory Process Flowchart (see Appendix 2), recorded digitally on a Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) (see Appendix 3) and stored on the College's data management system (Private Folder 6/CPOMs/SIMS).

Records will be maintained in line with our Data Protection Policy in a private folder within central records, password protected and open only to key personnel e.g. Pastoral Team/Designated Teacher/Vice Principal/Principal.

Upon receipt of a concern of bullying-type behaviour, designated staff will:

- Clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records and previous assessments
- Collaboratively assess the incident using the TRIP criteria (Record on BCAF Part 1)

Where bullying-type behaviour has been confirmed, staff will be in consultation with students involved and their parents/carers. Designated staff (Head of Year/Head of School/Pastoral Support Coordinator/Vice Principal/Principal) will ensure that Parts 2-4 of the BCAF are completed and will:

- Identify methods and potential motivating factors (Record on BCAF Part 2)
- Identify relevant level of support and intervention (Levels 1-4)
- Select appropriate support and interventions (see Appendices 4-5) for all students involved (Record on BCAF Part 3a for 'the student experiencing' and 3b for 'the student displaying' bullying-type behaviour)
- Ensure selected approaches are aligned to and in the context of wider Child Protection/Safeguarding, SEN, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Positive Behaviour Policies
- Implement, track, monitor and record effectiveness of supports and interventions (BCAF Part 3)
- Review outcome of interventions (Record on BCAF Part 4)
- Select and implement further interventions, as necessary
- Based on the level of progress, revisit BCAF Parts 3a and 3b or proceed to case closure

Please note details of support and intervention plans cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that student and his/her parents/carers.

SECTION 7

7. **Monitoring and Review of the Addressing Bullying Policy**

7.1 **Monitoring the Effectiveness of the College's Addressing Bullying Policy**

The Act places responsibility on the Board of Governors, in consultation with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Addressing Bullying Policy. To this end, the Board of Governors will:

- maintain a standing item on the agenda meetings of the Safeguarding Committee of the Board of Governors, where a report on bullying-type behaviour is presented by the Pastoral Support Coordinator (see Appendix 9).
- appoint a lead Governor to liaise with the Principal (e.g. Designated Governor for Child Protection).
- Minute the number of incidents, including methods, motivations and how they were addressed.
- Identify trends and patterns to inform future policy and practice development and review.
- Record written responses to relevant students, parents/carers, when appropriate.

7.2 **Review of the College's Addressing Bullying Policy**

The College's Addressing Bullying Policy will be reviewed in consultation with all school community stakeholders:

- at intervals of no less than four years
- following any complex incident which highlights the need for such a review
- when reviewing other associated policies, such as the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and the Positive Behaviour Policy
- in response to a recommendation by the Education and Training Inspectorate
- following new guidance as directed by the Department of Education.

A copy of this policy is available online at www.knock.co.uk. Parents/carers can also request a hard copy by contacting Reception on 028 9040 1184 or by emailing info@knock.co.uk.

7.3. **How to Raise a Concern or Make a Complaint about the Administration of this Policy**

If you have a concern or complaint about the administration of this policy, please contact Ms McCarthy, Vice Principal, in the first instance. If necessary, you may then access and follow the College's Complaints Procedure which is available on the College website at www.knock.co.uk. Should you remain dissatisfied with the College's response after completing the internal complaints procedure, you can bring your complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman within six months. Contact details for the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman are provided on Page 11 of the Complaints Procedure.

Signed: **Mr Leo O'Reilly**
(Chairperson of Board of Governors)

Date: **13th January 2025**

Signed: **Miss Deborah McLaughlin**
(Principal)

Date: **13th January 2025**

Legislative Context and Guidance Links

The Legislative Context:

- [Anti-discrimination laws applicable in Northern Ireland \(Equality Commission, 2024\)](#)
- [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#)
- [Public Services Ombudsman Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#)
- [The Children's Services Cooperation Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2015](#)
- [The Education \(School Development Plans\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2010](#)
- [The Special Education Needs and Disability Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2005](#)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/8/contents>
- [The Education \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1998](#)
- [The Education and Libraries Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2003 \(A17-19\)](#)
- [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 Section 75](#)
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [The Children \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1995](#)
- [The Health and Safety at Work Order \(Northern Ireland\) 1978](#)

The Policy and Guidance Context:

- [Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland and Executive Summary \(QUB and SBI, 2024\)](#)
- [CCEA Relationships and Education Resource Guidance \(2024\)](#)
- [ETI Safeguarding Proforma \(ETI, 2023\)](#)
- [Nurture Group Provision Guidance for Schools \(DE, 2023\)](#)
- [Draft Consultation: Consultation on the Statutory Guidance On The Reduction And Management Of Restrictive Practices In Educational Settings In Northern Ireland \(DE, 2023\) DE, DoH & DoJ](#)
- [Children and Young Peoples Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework \(DE, 2021\) DE/DoH](#)
- [A Life Deserved: Caring for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland \(DOH and DE, 2021\)](#)
- [Suspensions and Exclusions for Pupils in Northern Ireland \(DE Circular, March 2021\)](#)
- [Model Equality and Inclusion Policy and Guidance \(EA, 2020\)](#)
- [Resource File for Children with Special Educational Needs \(DE, 2020\)](#)
- [Guidance on Identifying and Supporting Learners with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties \(CCEA, 2020\)](#)
- [Mental health care systems \(SBNI, 2019\)](#)
- [The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors \(DE, 2019\)](#)
- [Putting Care into Education \(DE, 2018\)](#)
- [Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools \(DE, 2017\)](#)
- [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures \(SBNI, 2017\)](#)
- [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland \(Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016\)](#)
- [Miss School = Miss Out Improving Pupil Attendance Strategy \(DE, 2016\)](#)
- [Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour \(DE, 2001\)](#)
- [Every School a Good School DE 2009 <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/every-school-good-school-esags>](#)

The International Context

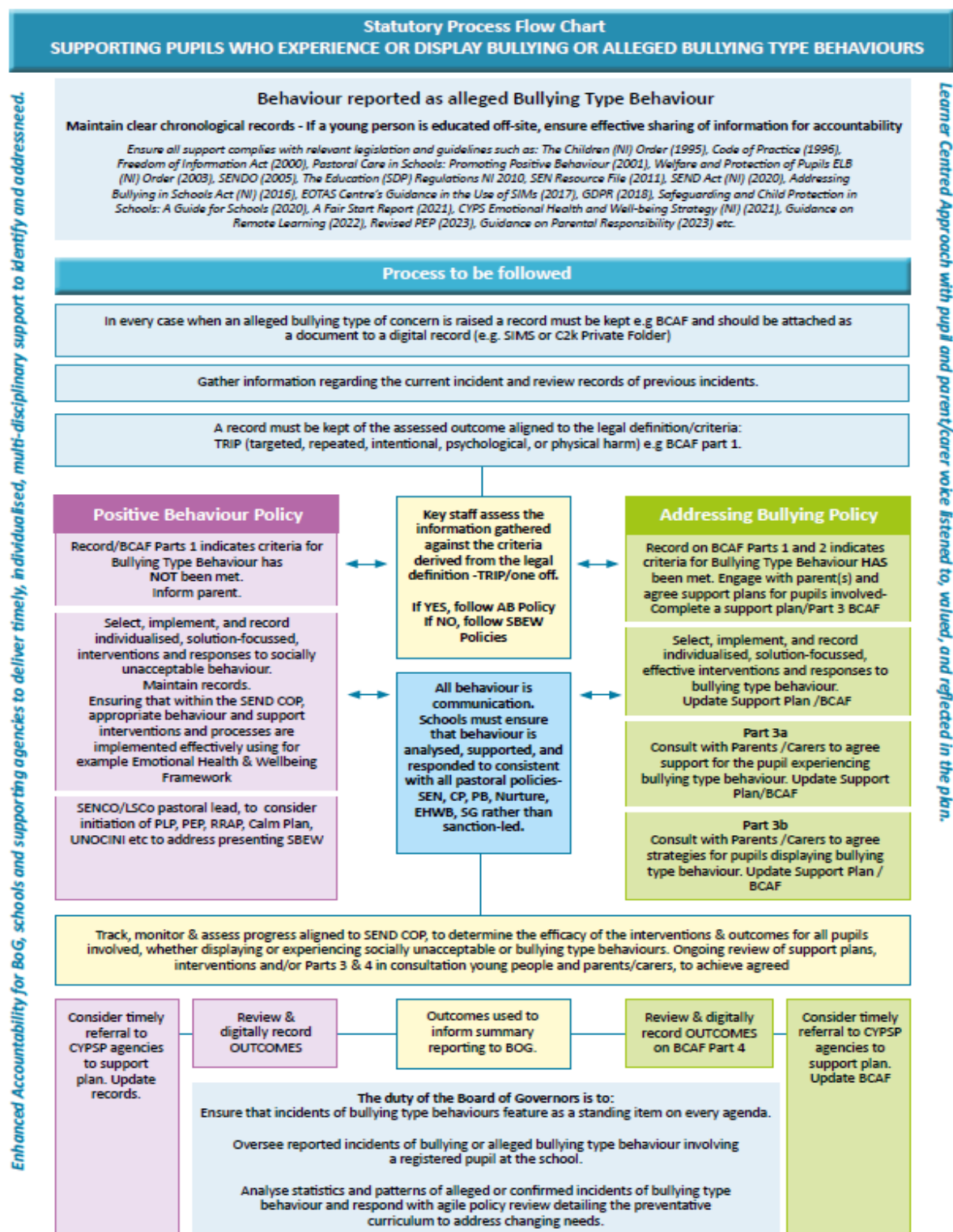
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

To:

- Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation (A,19)
- Be protected from discrimination (A, 2)
- Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously (A.12)
- Education (A.28)

Statutory Process Flowchart

(to be updated by EA in August 2025)



Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) Template

(available in Private Folder 6) (to be updated by EA in September 2025)

Pupils Involved	Role	Incident Date	Gender	DOB	Year and Reg

Incident	Comments

PART 1

ASSESSMENT OF CONCERN	Date:	
Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as follows: <i>“bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of —</i> <i>(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication</i> <i>(b) any other act, or</i> <i>(c) any combination of those,</i> <i>by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.</i>		
	Name(s)	Gender M/F
Person(s) reporting concern		
Check records for previously recorded incidents		

Outline of incident(s): Attach all written accounts/drawings of incident(s) completed by targeted pupil, witnesses (i.e. other pupils, staff). Include dates of event(s), the type of information gathered and where the information is stored (i.e. on paper or in SIMS). You can copy and paste from CPOMs if relevant.		
Date	Information gathered	Location (stored)

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying behaviour when, on the basis of the information gathered, the criteria listed below have been met: The school will treat any incident which meets these criteria as bullying behaviours.	
Is the behaviour intentional?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour repeated?	YES / NO
Is the behaviour causing physical or emotional harm?	YES / NO
Does the behaviour involve omission? (*may not always be present)	YES / NO
YES the above criteria have been met and bullying behaviour has occurred.	NO the above criteria have not been met and bullying behaviour has not occurred.
Proceed to complete Part 2 of this Bullying Concern Assessment Form	The criteria having not been met, record of behaviour. Track and monitor. Follow Positive Behaviour Policy.
Agreed by:	
Status:	
On:	

PART 2

2.1 Who was targeted by this behaviour? Select one or more of the following: ☐ Individual to individual ☐ Individual to group ☐ Group to individual ☐ Group to group	2.2 In what way did the bullying behaviour present? Select one or more of the following: ☐ Physical (includes for example, jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching/kicking) ☐ Any other physical contact (which may include use of weapons) ☐ Verbal (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours) ☐ Indirect (includes omission, isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others) ☐ Electronic (through technology such as mobile phones and internet) ☐ Written ☐ Other Acts - Please specify:																											
2.3 Motivation (underlying themes): this is not a definitive list Select one or more of the following: <table border="0"> <tr> <td>☐ Age</td> <td>☐ Appearance</td> <td>☐ Race</td> </tr> <tr> <td>☐ Religion</td> <td>☐ Cultural</td> <td>☐ Ability</td> </tr> <tr> <td>☐ Community background</td> <td>☐ Political Affiliation</td> <td>☐ Looked After Status (LAC)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>☐ Gender Identity</td> <td>☐ Pregnancy</td> <td>☐ Peer Relationship Breakdown</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">☐ Sexual Orientation</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">☐ Family Circumstance (marital status, young carer status)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">☐ Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">☐ Not known</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">☐ Other – Please specify: </td> </tr> </table>		☐ Age	☐ Appearance	☐ Race	☐ Religion	☐ Cultural	☐ Ability	☐ Community background	☐ Political Affiliation	☐ Looked After Status (LAC)	☐ Gender Identity	☐ Pregnancy	☐ Peer Relationship Breakdown	☐ Sexual Orientation			☐ Family Circumstance (marital status, young carer status)			☐ Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)			☐ Not known			☐ Other – Please specify:		
☐ Age	☐ Appearance	☐ Race																										
☐ Religion	☐ Cultural	☐ Ability																										
☐ Community background	☐ Political Affiliation	☐ Looked After Status (LAC)																										
☐ Gender Identity	☐ Pregnancy	☐ Peer Relationship Breakdown																										
☐ Sexual Orientation																												
☐ Family Circumstance (marital status, young carer status)																												
☐ Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)																												
☐ Not known																												
☐ Other – Please specify:																												

PART 3a

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name:

Year Group/Class:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent/ carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff Involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carers:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

PART 3b

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

Pupil Name:

Year Group/Class:

REFER TO SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Parent/ carer informed:

Date:

By whom:

Staff Involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carers:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

PART 4

REVIEW OF BULLYING CONCERN AND ACTIONS TO DATE

Date of Review Meeting: _____

4a- Following the Review Meeting, to what extent have the success criteria been met?

- ☐ 1 – Fully
- ☐ 2 – Partially
- ☐ 3 – Further intervention/support required

Give details:

Part 4b- If the success criteria have not been met, continue to:

- ☐ Re-assess Level of Interventions and implement other strategies from an appropriate level
- ☐ Track, monitor and review the outcomes of further intervention
- ☐ Keep under review the Stage of Code of Practice each pupil is on
- ☐ Follow Safeguarding Policy
- ☐ Seek multi-agency input (EA, Health and Social Services etc.)
- ☐ Engage with Board of Governors

Agreed by:

School

Signed:

Date:

Parent

Signed:

Date:

Pupil

Signed:

Date:

Effective Responses to Socially Unacceptable/Bullying-Type Behaviour,

Support and Intervention Levels 1 and 2

This list is not exhaustive and supports implemented are specific to each individual student.

Level 1: Interventions at Level 1 are designed to support students experiencing and/or displaying socially unacceptable or bullying-type behaviours. These interventions should be taken forward while listening to, supporting, and strengthening relationships with and between the students involved. • Schedule a solution focussed meeting via telephone with parents/carers of the child experiencing or displaying • Review SEND CoP and the potential requirement for PLP to address needs e.g. SBEW, ASD, MLD, ADHD • Refer, align and link to existing support plans e.g. Pupil Learning Plan (PLP), Risk Reduction and Action Plan (RRAP), Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP), Child Looked After Personal Education Plan (PEP) etc • Explore the concept of bullying type behaviour through resources e.g. ABSIT Information Leaflets and High Five resources • Complete and/or review additional assessments to build a picture of SBEW needs e.g. GL PASS • Use visual reminders of positive expectations • Explore friendship as a concept • Develop social skills/stories and additional emotional literacy sessions • Enhance structure during unstructured time e.g. clubs, jobs, supervised safe spaces, zoned areas, breakfast clubs etc. • Explicitly teach positive expectations • Explore additional opportunities to build empathy and kindness e.g. High Five Resources, Roots of Empathy, Restorative Approaches, Hopeful Minds • Create activities, clubs, and events to grow social communication skills • Review transition planning and student support across phases, year groups, schools • Use College Friends support • Use Addressing Bullying Mentors • Other. Select further supports and interventions other resources e.g. SEN Resource File, Emotional Health and Well-being Framework, Trauma Informed, IES Newcomer Good Practice Guidance, Putting Care into Education etc.	Level 2: Interventions at Level 2 are in addition to those at Level 1 but may involve a shift from individual support to group or whole class interventions. The need for group work around behaviour, could reflect potential escalation and a wider impact. • Assign key adult(s) to facilitate ongoing group engagement, check-ins, and reflection • Consider access to nurture support, post primary well-being hub etc to support SBEW needs • Review SEND CoP and the potential requirement for PLP to address needs e.g. SBEW, ASD, MLD, ADHD • Refer, align and link to existing support plans e.g. Pupil Learning Plan (PLP), Risk Reduction and Action Plan (RRAP), Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP), Child Looked After Personal Education Plan (PEP) etc • Scaffold student experience to help build new relationships/ friendships e.g. flexible groupings, seating plans. See 'Good Practice Advice & Guidance for Schools Receiving Newcomers Including Pupils Seeking Asylum' document • Create, agree, and embed additional positive group expectations and routines • Use restorative practices, group mediation and conflict resolution approaches (ERTBB) • Use role plays, narrative/social stories, and problem-solving scenarios to identify, practice and model appropriate social skills • Use SMART(E) targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound and Evidence-based) for adult monitoring, to ensure increased 'felt' safety and connection for all student • Partner with positive role model(s) to reaffirm socially acceptable and upstander behaviour • Provide access to School Counselling (Family Works, Time to Talk) or other therapeutic service • Provide opportunities for student to experience additional responsibility, building sense of belonging and self esteem • Consider referral to community-based organisations e.g. mentoring programmes • Build group awareness of bystander and upstander behaviours • Consider referral to Family Support Hub • Consider referral to EA services for advice • Develop a support network to scaffold student(s) in school e.g. supportive adults around the student, seek help/support • Facilitate intervention sessions regarding on-line behaviour and safety e.g. resources on SBNI hub and Safer Schools App • Introduce further group interventions focused on emotional well-being/literacy, resilience, e.g. High Five approaches, social thinking programmes, Apps, cards, Blob Tree exercise etc. • Use targeted small group circle time, College Friends • Other. Select further supports and interventions from Level 1 strategies or other resources (see Level 1 for list)
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Effective Responses to Socially Unacceptable/Bullying-Type Behaviour,

Support and Intervention Levels 3 and 4

This list is not exhaustive and supports implemented are specific to each individual student.

Level 3: Interventions at Level 3 are in addition to those at levels 1 and 2 and address bullying type behaviour that may be more sustained, complex and with increased risk to those involved. Responses at this level are led by Senior Pastoral, Safeguarding and SEND staff working with students, parents/carers, and relevant agencies to agree supports under review. • Arrange and contribute to a multi-disciplinary meeting to inform ongoing support and intervention with allied professionals • Avail of nurture support, post primary well-being hub etc to support SBEW needs • Review SEND CoP, update PLP to address SEND/SBEW needs, and consider emergency Annual Review as appropriate • Refer, align and link to existing support plans e.g. Pupil Learning Plan (PLP), Risk Reduction and Action Plan (RRAP), • Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP), Child Looked After Personal Education Plan (PEP) as appropriate • Schedule regular check-ins with a trusted adult or supportive adults around the student • Complete a referral and engage with external agencies to facilitate an agreed intervention programme • Consider/make additional referral to community-based organisations e.g. CYPSP Partners, mentoring programmes • Facilitate additional one to one session focusing on emotional wellbeing/literacy/resilience • Contact EA services for further advice and guidance • Facilitate additional one to one intervention programme to teach and model the importance of empathy and kindness towards others • Facilitate additional one to one session with a focus on self-regulation and social communication • Facilitate intervention sessions regarding on-line behaviour and e-safety e.g. see resources on SBNI hub and Safer Schools App • Make reasonable adjustments to support de-escalation, inclusion, and pupil SEND/SBEW needs • Provide opportunities to work one to one with a supportive adult • Provide targeted support to scaffold appropriate friendships/relationships • Refer to Education Welfare Service where attendance is impacted and EWS thresholds are met • Complete a referral and engage with EA services to facilitate an agreed intervention programme	Level 4: Bullying type behaviours assessed at Level 4 are complex, significant, and involve a threat to the safety and welfare of the students involved. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to any/all the students involved. As such, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures must be applied. Responses continue to be led by Senior Pastoral, Safeguarding and SEND staff working with students, parents/carers and relevant agencies to agree supports and implementation. Interventions at level 4 are in addition to those in levels 1-3. • Continue in the context of multi-agency advice and planning to reflect, respond, resolve, and restore in relation to ongoing concerns, with trusted adult(s) and/or mentor(s) • Review Risk Reduction and Action Plan and implement strategies to prevent triggers impacting • Review SEND CoP, update PLP to address SEND/SBEW needs and initiate emergency Annual Review if appropriate • Refer, align and link to existing support plans e.g. Pupil Learning Plan (PLP), Risk Reduction and Action Plan (RRAP), Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP), Child Looked After Personal Education Plan (PEP) etc • Ensure compliance with current DE guidelines and safeguarding requirements when considering suspension based on risk with the understanding that school must plan for inclusion • Initiate/review Child Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) • Initiate/review of Child Looked After Personal Education Plan (PEP) • Refer to EA services for specialised support e.g. CPSS for advice. • Refer to external agencies for further specialised support e.g. GP, CAMHS, Family Support Hub, PSNI etc • Refer to Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) • Refer to relevant investigative agencies e.g. PSNI, HSCT, Gateway etc • Complete a UNOCINI. • Further review bullying type concerns alongside other school policies including Safeguarding and Child Protection, Positive Behaviour, Reasonable Force and Safe Handling, Inclusion and Diversity, and SEND Policies that are aligned to current legislative guidance • Evaluate need for specialist provision or exceptional circumstances to aid ongoing support and intervention • Other. Select further supports and interventions from Levels 1-3 strategies or other resources e.g. SEN Resource File, Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework, Trauma Informed, IES Newcomer Good Practice Guidance, Putting Care into Education etc.
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Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that all members of our school community have the right to a safe, supportive, learning environment. We all have a role and responsibility to prevent and address bullying type behaviour.

Staff Rights	Children & Young People's Rights	Parent/Carer's Rights
• Safe and secure working environment with appropriate training to meet the needs of the young people in their care. • Emotional health and wellbeing promoted and supported by colleagues. • Access to ongoing PD including Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016, Addressing Bullying Policy, legislative processes & systems to report, record and respond to all allegations/incidents of bullying type behaviour and wider SBEW training. • Informed, consulted on, and 'have a say' within Addressing Bullying Policy review, preventative curriculum content, support/intervention plans and procedures. • Kept informed and updated in relation to children and young people's progress and wellbeing. • To know the identified individual needs (including SEND and medical needs) of the young people in their care and the support plans to address these needs. • Participate where appropriate in decision making processes that concern them – safeguarding, support/intervention plans (BCAF, IEP, RRAP, Calm Plan), preventative curriculum strategies and behaviour reflection.	• Emotional health and wellbeing promoted and supported through a preventative curriculum. • Respected and included within a safe, diverse school community, where they are valued, listened to, and acknowledged by all. • Have equal opportunities and effective partnerships for positive learning and social experiences with school staff, children, and young people. • To support and interventions to address verbal, emotional, psychological, and physical socially unacceptable/bullying type behaviours. • Readily available school safeguarding and SEND policies including Addressing Bullying Policy, clear understanding outlining processes/systems to report, record and respond to allegations/incidents of Bullying Type Behaviour. • Access to pastoral staff to share concerns and discuss appropriate and timely support and intervention, which incorporate SEN, Trauma Informed approaches and Restorative Practices etc. • Relational and solution focused support whether displaying or experiencing socially unacceptable/bullying type behaviour. • Individual needs to be addressed through the suite of pastoral/safeguarding policies. • Timely referrals to EA services (e.g. EWS, LITs, CPSS, Educational Psychology) and external organisations, support groups and agencies (e.g. CAMHS, Family Hub, G.P., PSNI, HSCT etc) to address BTB when and where appropriate. • Opportunities for involvement in peer support and/or mentoring.	• Their child/young person receives a quality learning experience. • Their child/young person is taught in a relational, nurturing, and safe environment. • Their child/young person is treated fairly and with respect. • A school environment that promotes effective partnerships and positive relations with school staff. • Readily available school safeguarding and SEND policies including Addressing Bullying Policy, clear understanding outlining processes/systems to report, record and respond to allegations/incidents of Bullying Type Behaviour. • Consulted regarding school policies including Addressing Bullying Policy development and review processes. • Kept informed and updated about their child's/young person's progress, wellbeing, relevant needs/concerns and/or instances as outlined in the Addressing Bullying Policy. • Participate in decision making processes that concern their child/young person – support/intervention plans (BCAF, IEP, RRAP), preventative curriculum strategies, behaviour reflection and external supports accessed. • Listened to, valued, respected, and responded to sensitively, in a timely manner as outlined in the Addressing Bullying Policy.

Staff Roles & Responsibilities	Children & Young People's Roles & Responsibilities	Parent/Carer's Roles & Responsibilities
• Encourage socially acceptable behaviour within an inclusive, empathetic whole school environment. • Create opportunities to celebrate success, diversity, and equality to create a positive ethos. • Plan and deliver an ongoing preventative curriculum, which is updated to address need. • Act in a professional manner to model, teach and develop children/young people's interpersonal and emotional skills. • Undertake Addressing Bullying in Schools training and support as part of PD. • Co-develop, implement, and promote your Addressing Bullying Policy to enable easy access for all clear understanding of processes/systems for all and an opportunity to seek clarification from Pastoral lead staff if necessary. • Review your Addressing Bullying Policy with all stakeholders within your school community, at least every 4 years or in response to concerns raised/need. • Keep digital records of Bullying Type Behaviour allegations and incidents using the Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF). • Build effective partnerships and positive relations with and between children, young people, parents/carers and staff (including explicit approaches to connect with vulnerable and hard-to-reach families). • Take timely and appropriate action to address children, young people, parent/carers, and staff concerns. • Use relational and evidence informed approaches e.g. SEN, Trauma Informed and Restorative Practice etc to support all interventions for both those displaying and experiencing socially unacceptable/bullying type behaviour. • Address individual needs through the suite of pastoral/safeguarding/SEND policies. • Work in partnership with and make timely referrals to EA services (e.g. EWS, LITs, CPSS, Educational Psychology) and external organisations, support groups and agencies (e.g. CAMHS, Family Hub, G.P., PSNI, HSCT etc) to address BTB when and where appropriate. • Maintain effective communication using agreed and appropriate channels with and between students, parents/carers, colleagues and Board of Governors.	• Report allegations and/or bullying type concerns via the designated channels and platforms e.g. talk to a trusted adult or through Bullying Concern Box. • Request and engage with appropriate support both within and outside school via e.g. the designated staff member as outlined in the Addressing Bullying Policy. • Contribute to learning and personal development targets on the e.g. BCAF, Calm Plan, PLP, RRAP with support. • Endeavor to constructively engage with reflection, support and intervention offered. • Act in a respectful, kind, empathetic manner i.e. Students <i>don't have to be friends with everyone but have to be friendly.</i> • Reflect on, assess, and review individual progress with school staff, parents/guardians, and external supports in context of appropriate support plans e.g. BCAF, PLP, RRAP.	• Raise concerns with staff in a timely and appropriate manner, using the school's reporting system as outlined in their Addressing Bullying Policy. • Respond timely to staff communications regarding bullying type concerns. • Attend support and intervention meetings to agree next steps and plans moving forward. • Support the implementation of agreed plans e.g. BCAF, PLP, RRAP. • Communicate directly with school using agreed channels, respecting the needs and confidentiality of all involved. • Encourage their child/young person to model the school's ethos and values. • Engage with wider services and agencies to support you child or young person as required. • Refer any concerns regarding the school management of bullying type concerns through the school complaints procedure.

Education Authority - ABSIT Parent Guide



Addressing Bullying Type Behaviour in Schools



PARENT GUIDE

What is Bullying Type Behaviour?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2016 (NI)

Bullying type behaviour exists in all communities including schools. To respond to this, a new law commenced on 1st September 2021 in Northern Ireland. It provides schools with one legal definition to assess all reported alleged incidents of bullying type behaviour in schools.

The law states that in all schools:
"Bullying" includes, but isn't limited to, repeated verbal, written or electronic communication, by a pupil(s) against another pupil(s) that is intended to cause physical or emotional harm. This also includes leaving someone out on purpose."

To support a relational and solution focused approach, we no longer use the words 'bully' or 'victim'.

Instead we talk about:
'pupil displaying bullying type behaviour'
 AND
'pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour'

Behaviour that does not meet TRIP is referred to as **socially unacceptable behaviour**.

Whether socially unacceptable OR bullying type behaviour, school will support all young people involved to address the behaviour effectively.

When is it Bullying Type Behaviour?



When a concern of bullying type behaviour is shared, staff will clarify facts, perceptions and the individual needs of all pupils involved.

Staff will assess the reported incident using TRIP criteria and identify appropriate interventions aimed at repairing relationships.

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying type behaviour when, on the basis of the information gathered, TRIP criteria are confirmed:

Targeted

When the behaviour is **TARGETED** at a specific pupil or group of pupils.

Repeated

When the behaviour is **REPEATED** over a period of time.

Intentional

When the behaviour is deliberately **INTENDED** to cause harm.

Psychological/Physical

When the behaviour causes **PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL** or **PHYSICAL** harm.

A significant One-off Incident can be considered bullying type behaviour if included in the school policy e.g. where a digital communication has been intentionally shared widely to cause harm.

Imbalance of Power, Motivation and Methods

Imbalance of Power

When TRIP is fully evidenced, schools can consider the non statutory, **imbalance of power**, as a criteria to confirm their decision.

Motivation

Bullying type behaviour in school usually involves a breakdown in peer relationships. Motivation can be related to vulnerable, or minority groups based on e.g. **race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, age, appearance, child looked after (CLA), community background, cultural, family circumstances and political affiliation.**

Method

Bullying type behaviour can present as relational, verbal or physical and can take place online or offline.

Signs that my child could be experiencing bullying type behaviour

Your child may behave differently or show some of the following signs if experiencing bullying type behaviour.



Preventative Measures

Schools aim to create and maintain a safe, nurturing, learning environment. Measures are put in place to protect and support those children and young people experiencing or displaying bullying type behaviour to tackle the problem effectively.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to prevent and address bullying type behaviour, whether in person and/or online, as outlined in the school Addressing Bullying Type Behaviour Policy.

School staff work with pupils, parents and carers to agree a relational, solution focused plan to support those experiencing the behaviour and a separate plan for those displaying the behaviour.

The legislation enables schools to address online bullying type behaviours occurring outside school, and/or on the journey to and from school where there is impact on the child's learning.

What should I do if my child is experiencing bullying type behaviour?

- Stay calm, listen and reassure your child.
- Report concerns to school staff directly.
- Agree a support plan with staff and your child.
- Review and amend the plan with your child and school staff in response to outcome at agreed intervals.

How do I report my concern?

- Reporting procedures are outlined in your school policy. Report your concern as soon as possible.
- Arrange an appointment to meet pastoral staff.
- Outline details of your concern and give staff time to gather information and consider supports.

Details of concern are shared

Staff record the concern electronically e.g. may complete a Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) for all pupils involved.

Behaviour assessed against the legal definition and TRIP criteria activated. Parents/Carers informed.

Legal definition of bullying type behaviour NOT met

Socially unacceptable behaviour is supported using e.g. Positive Behaviour Policy and safeguarding Policy.

Legal definition of bullying type behaviour IS met

Bullying type behaviour is supported using Addressing Bullying in School Policy.

Relational supports for all pupils involved are agreed, implemented, tracked and reviewed to determine if the situation has improved or if further support is required that may involve other agencies.

Complaints
 Parents and carers can access the school's Complaints Policy on the school website or on request from the school office.

Be aware that only the Northern Ireland legal definition applies to our schools. Further information and advice.



ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE



www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/addressing-bullying-schools-act



Text-e-Nurse | HSC Public Health Agency (hscni.net)



<http://safer-schools-ni.co.uk/>



Youth Wellness Web - Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSM) (hscni.net)

Education Authority - ABSIT Post-Primary Student Guide



Addressing Bullying Type Behaviour in Schools

POST PRIMARY



What is Bullying Type Behaviour?

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act 2015 (NIS)

Bullying type behaviour exists in all communities including schools. To respond to this, a new law commenced on 1st September 2021 in Northern Ireland. It provides schools with one legal definition to assess all reported alleged incidents of bullying type behaviour in schools.

The law states that in all schools:
"Bullying" includes, but isn't limited to, repeated verbal, written or electronic communication, by a pupil(s) against another pupil(s) that is intended to cause physical or emotional harm. This also includes leaving someone out on purpose."

To support a relational and solution focused approach, we no longer use the words 'bully' or 'victim'.

Instead we talk about:
 'pupil displaying bullying type behaviour'
 AND
 'pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour'.

Behaviour that does not meet TRIP is referred to as socially unacceptable behaviour.

Whether socially unacceptable OR bullying type behaviour, school will support all young people involved to address the behaviour effectively.

What to do if you need help?

Speak to an Adult You Trust
 Speak to a family member, Form Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care or other safe adult who will listen and agree a support plan.

Keep a Record
 Keep a record of what's been going on. Report inappropriate online communication to the social media company and block the user. Don't reply.

Identify opportunities to meet new friends. Try morning, lunch or after school activities.
 You may want to contact a free, confidential helpline e.g. Childline 0800 11 11

Stay Positive
 You have done the right thing in coming forward.
 Focus on the positives in your life.
 Celebrate your unique qualities.
 Find healthy ways to relieve stress such as exercise, meditation, positive self-talk, join a sports club and do things you enjoy.

Other things to do in school:
 Speak to your student council about setting up a peer support scheme; or a student diversity, equity and inclusion committee.

When is it Bullying Type Behaviour?

T R I P

When a concern of bullying type behaviour is shared, staff will clarify facts, perceptions and the individual needs of all pupils involved.

Staff will assess the reported incident using TRIP criteria and identify appropriate interventions aimed at repairing relationships.

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying type behaviour when, on the basis of the information gathered, TRIP criteria are confirmed:

Targeted
 When the behaviour is TARGETED at a specific pupil or group of pupils.

Repeated
 When the behaviour is REPEATED over a period of time.

Intentional
 When the behaviour is deliberately INTENDED to cause harm.

Psychological/Physical
 When the behaviour causes PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL or PHYSICAL harm.

A significant One-off incident can be considered bullying type behaviour if included in the school policy e.g. where a digital communication has been intentionally shared widely to cause harm.

Why does bullying type behaviour happen?
 Bullying type behaviour in school usually involves a breakdown in peer relationships. Motivation can be related to vulnerable, or minority groups based on e.g. race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, age, appearance, child looked after (CLA), community background, cultural, family circumstances and political affiliation.

How might bullying type behaviour present?
 Bullying type behaviour can present as relational, verbal, or physical and can take place online and offline.

Imbalance of Power

When assessing a concern, schools can consider if some pupils involved appear more powerful than others.

What will happen when I report my concern?

Pupils can report concerns confidentially. Staff will support concerns relationally in line with statutory guidance.

Concerns are reported to school staff.

Staff gather information and record the concern digitally e.g. they may use a Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF).

The legal definition and TRIP criteria used to assess behaviour. Parents/Carers consulted.

Legal definition of bullying type behaviour NOT met.

Legal definition of bullying type behaviour IS met.

Socially unacceptable behaviour identified is supported using Positive

Behaviour, Safeguarding and Pastoral Policies.

Bullying type behaviour identified and supported using the school Addressing Bullying Policy.

Solution orientated supports for all pupils involved agreed, implemented, tracked and reviewed to determine if the situation has improved or if further support is required that may involve other agencies.

If a friend shares that they are being bullied?

Thank your friend for trusting you and listen without interruption.

Minimising. Focus solely on what you are being told and show you are listening without giving your opinion.

Use Body Language. e.g. nod, make eye contact to show you are listening.

Ask questions and don't rush the conversation as it is important that your friend feels heard and supported.

Approach a staff member if you are concerned about your friend's safety and wellbeing. Encourage them to speak to an appropriate adult.

Be aware that only the Northern Ireland legal definition applies to our schools. Further information and advice.



 ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE



www.education-ni.gov.uk/publishing/default.asp?cid=1&cid2=1&cid3=1&cid4=1&cid5=1


www.safer-schools-ni.org.uk/


[Health Service NI Govt Public Health Agency School](http://www.healthservice-ni.gov.uk/)


[South Western Web - Children and Young People's Services Partnership \(NI\) Ltd](http://www.southwesternweb.co.uk/)

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016:

Reporting to Board of Governors Pro-forma

Reporting timeframe and date e.g. Term 1 2024-25 _____

Staff member reporting _____ **Date of meeting** _____

Number of allegations of bullying type behaviour	
Number of cases that did not meet TRIP criteria	
Number of cases that met TRIP criteria	
Identified methods of confirmed bullying type behaviour and number of each e.g. Physical - 3	
Potential motivation for bullying type behaviour and number of each identified e.g. Racism - 2	
Support and interventions in place for both students displaying and experiencing bullying type behaviour. (Yes/No)	
Emerging trends identified and how these are being responded to.	
Areas identified as priority for School Development Planning.	