

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

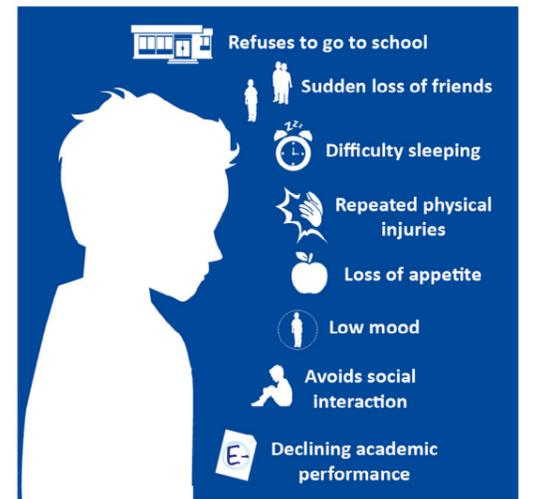
Bullying type behaviour in school usually involves a breakdown in peer relationships. Motivation can be related to vulnerable, or minority groups based on e.g. *race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, age, appearance, child looked after (CLA), community background, cultural,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



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



<https://saferschoolsni.co.uk/>



[Text-a-Nurse | HSC Public Health Agency \(hscni.net\)](http://Text-a-Nurse | HSC Public Health Agency (hscni.net))



[Youth Wellness Web – Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership \(CYPSP\) \(hscni.net\)](http://Youth Wellness Web – Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) (hscni.net))

Preventative Measures

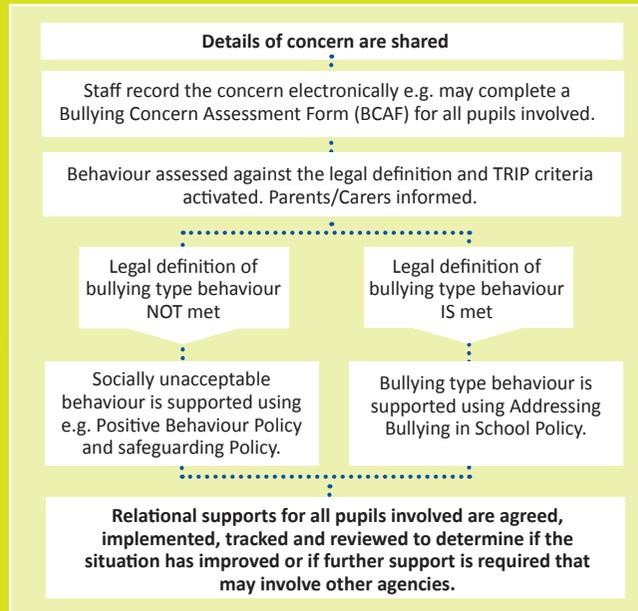
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Addressing Bullying Type Behaviour in Schools Parent Guide



A parent friendly guide to preventing and responding to bullying type behaviours



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Definition

1 In the Act “bullying” includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of...

- any verbal, written or electronic communication,
- any other act, or
- 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.

It is a statutory duty for schools to relationally support all pupils to address bullying type behaviour in a solution orientated manner.

We refer to the **pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour** rather than ‘victim’.

We refer to the **pupil displaying bullying type behaviour** instead of ‘bully’ or ‘perpetrator’.

We refer to behaviours as **socially unacceptable behaviour** or **bullying type behaviour**.

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 those involved.

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

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

- 1** When the behaviour is **TARGETED** at a specific pupil or group of pupils.
- 2** When the behaviour is **REPEATED** over a period of time.
- 3** When the behaviour is deliberately **INTENDED** to cause harm.
- 4** When the behaviour causes **PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL** and/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 repeatedly and intentionally shared 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*

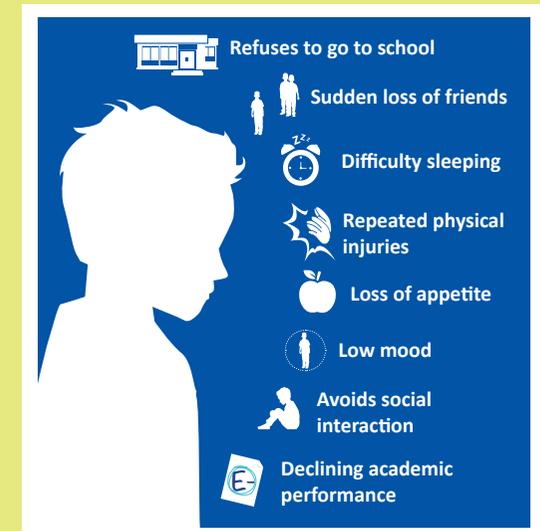
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and political affiliation.

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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.



If you feel you are experiencing bullying type behaviour

Talk to someone you trust

- a friend
- parents/carers
- teachers
- lunchtime supervisors

Or send a private message through your home-school communication app e.g. Seesaw, Google classroom, Dojo etc.

What will happen when you tell a teacher?

Your teacher, with school leaders, will support all children involved in a relational way. They will:

- ask you to share the details of your worry.
- keep a digital record of what you tell them and the support plan.
- confirm if the behaviour you described is socially unacceptable or bullying type behaviour.
- with parents or carers, agree a supportive plan for all children involved, to help put an end to the behaviours causing distress.

If a friend needs help

Thank your classmate for trusting you. It may have taken a lot of courage for them to tell you.

Let them tell you what is wrong and listen. Once they are finished, reassure them that it was ok to share the concern.

Encourage your classmate to ask a member of staff for help.

Accompany them to share their concern with a staff member who will provide support.

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Addressing Bullying Type Behaviour in Schools

PRIMARY



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2 The law says that bullying type behaviour is **mostly repeated verbal, written or electronic communication by a pupil(s) against another pupil(s) that is intended to cause physical or emotional harm. This can also include leaving someone out on purpose.**

3 To help repair the relationships and to support all children involved, we no longer use the words 'bully' or 'victim'.

Instead we talk about:

- 'pupil displaying bullying type behaviour'
- AND
- 'pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour'.

Other unkind behaviours can be called 'socially unacceptable behaviour'.

When is it bullying type behaviour?



Bullying type behaviour occurs when all four of the actions below are confirmed.



A serious **One-off Incident** can be considered bullying type behaviour (if included in the school policy) e.g. this may involve the **repeated** sharing of an unkind message or picture online to cause harm.

Imbalance of Power, Motivation and Methods

What if you feel others have more power?

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

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 does bullying type behaviour present?

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



Bullying type behaviour is usually when someone is repeatedly and deliberately causing hurt

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When is it Bullying Type Behaviour?



Bullying type behaviour occurs when all four of the actions below are confirmed.

Targeted

Behaviour is aimed at the same person or people

Repeated

Behaviour happens more than once

Intentional

Behaviour has been planned to cause harm

Psychological/Physical

Behaviour has caused emotional and/or physical harm

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