Addressing Bullying Type Behaviour in Schools

PRIMARY

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 allegations or incidents of bullying type behaviour in schools.

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.**

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?

TRIP

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

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?

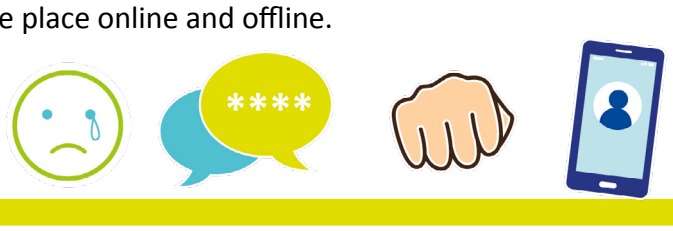
When assessing a concern, schools can consider if some pupils involved appear more powerful than others.

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.



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.

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

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)

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