



HAZELWOOD
INTEGRATED COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING
Child Protection in Education
Information for Parents

September 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

Bullying is among the top concerns that parents and children have about their children's safety and well-being in school and on the way to and from school.

Bullying can make the lives of young people a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on a young person's attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives.

The 'Addressing Bullying in Schools' came into effect across all schools in Northern Ireland from 1st September 2021.

What this means is that all schools should now use the same definition of bullying and have a legal duty and responsibility to investigate and address instances of bullying behaviour that are reported to them. We welcome the implementation of the legislation as it means that all schools can work together to address bullying in similar ways. There will hopefully now be a consistency in the methods and messages all schools use to address this type of behaviour and the ways that we support all young people to understand the impact of bullying behaviour on others.

In summary the legislation states that all schools must:

- Use the same legal definition of bullying.
- Carry out investigations and collect evidence.
- Use specific criteria to assess if repeated or one-off behavior is bullying or not.
- Offer supports to both the target and the person/s displaying bullying behaviour.
- Record concerns, evidence and supports offered in the same way.
- Ensure that preventative measures are in place to minimise incidents and educate young people.

At Hazelwood Integrated College we take all concerns around bullying behaviour seriously and we will continue to investigate, address, manage and support pupils when incidents occur, and issues arise. Our Anti-Bullying Policy can be found on our school website.

(<https://www.hazelwoodcollege.co.uk/school-policies/#content>) and has been reviewed and amended to reflect this legislation.

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 is not 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 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, based on the information gathered:

TRIP criteria are confirmed:

- When the behaviour is **TARGETED** at a specific pupil or group of pupils.
- When the behaviour is **REPEATED** over a period of time.
- When the behaviour is deliberately **INTENDED** to cause harm. 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.

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) etc.

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

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

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour:

Verbal or written acts

- saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others
- making fun of others
- calling another pupil mean and hurtful names.
- telling lies or spread false rumours about others.
- try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s.

Physical acts

- hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving
- material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions.

Omission (Exclusion)

- leaving someone out of a game
- refusing to include someone in group work.

Electronic Acts

- using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above
- impersonating someone online to cause hurt.
- sharing images (e.g., photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone.

This list is not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Parental leaflets on Anti Bullying in a range of languages can be found on the Education Authority link:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/policies-and-guidance/addressing-bullying-in-schools-act-2016/bullying#section-18322>

Preventative Measures

At Hazelwood Integrated College these actions will be taken forward, with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment.

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through Personal Development
- Through the preventative curriculum e.g., personal development, pastoral time, tutor time, assemblies, restorative practice, peer support groups through our Youth Work Department.
- Participation annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Access to counsellors/outside agencies with concerns
- Development of peer-led systems to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school.
- Development of effective strategies for playground management – designated areas for year groups, split lunches, staff duty etc.
- Year Group assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- Promotion of extra-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks.
- Hazelwood Integrated College will put in place preventative measures to prevent bullying behaviour on the way to and from school.
- Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.

- Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school (bus monitors).
- Regular engagement with transport providers such as Translink to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
- Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home. e.g., early morning SLT duties, staff break and lunch duty, bus duty including Whitwell Road and Grays Lane.

Hazelwood Integrated College will take steps to prevent bullying using electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during the term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school. School will raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support their pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible, and respectful way.

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through Person Development, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.

REPORTING A BULLYING CONCERN

Pupils Reporting a Concern

If a pupil has a bully concern they can:

- Verbally- talk to Head of Year or form tutor.
- By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g., in a homework diary)
- **ANY** pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour.
- Keep a Record Keep a record of what has been going on.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

- In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Form Tutor
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Head of Year or Vice-Principal.
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Year/Vice-Principal to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Principal.
- Where the parent/carers remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

Cyber Bullying - Best practice for parents and carers

1. HAVE AN OPEN CONVERSATION

Listen, and offer support and encouragement. If your child is the victim of cyberbullying, remind them that this is not their fault and that no one deserves to be treated in this way. Some young people think that if they are the target of online bullying, they must have done something wrong. It is also important to encourage your child to save the evidence. They can do this by taking a screenshot of what has happened or by keeping the messages they have received.

2. DON'T REPLY

Most of the time the person doing the bullying is looking for a reaction when they are being mean online. Tell your child not to reply, instead they should tell a trusted adult what has happened. Reassure them that even if they are also at fault, they should come and talk to you or a trusted adult. You can then work out the best way to resolve the situation together.

Report inappropriate online communication to the social media company and block the user. Do not reply.

3. DON'T DENY ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

Although it can be very tempting to remove a device from a young person if they are being bullied, having their device taken away may prevent them from speaking to you about worrying issues in the future.

4. DISCUSS NEXT STEPS

Ask your child what they want you to do next. This might involve speaking to school to get support and advice, blocking the user or profile, or reporting the behaviour to the site or service it is on.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/online-issue/online-bullying>

Further advice and guidance can be found on the 'Safe Schools App' and 'SWGL' function at the bottom of the school webs

