

ST AMBROSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



ANTI-BULLYING (Including Cyberbullying) POLICY

AUTUMN 2021

Reviewed: September 2024 by SH

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of St. Ambrose Preparatory School and with due regard to the school's mission statement:

At St Ambrose Preparatory School
we are joyful learners and are inspired to always do our best.
We nurture the many gifts we have been given and seek to use them wisely for the benefit of ourselves and others.

We put love into action each day so we are advocates of change in the world,
Living the Gospel and the Catholic faith and Celebrating the values of Blessed Edmund Rice,
With our family and the whole Ambrosian community.

'Have courage, the good seed will grow up in the children's hearts'
Blessed Edmund Rice

Our Vision

Our Vision is to be an exemplar Edmund Rice School, with an enviable reputation amongst our peers, both as an organisation and for the services and facilities we provide, making us first choice for parents and pupils in our geographic area.

Our Ethos & Values

At St Ambrose we provide a Catholic school community in which pupils feel welcome, safe, recognised for their individuality – supported by a community of love, and affection. We strive to live the Gospel in all aspects of school life and policy, following Blessed Edmund's footsteps.

St Ambrose Preparatory School Anti-Bullying Policy

The Governing Body of St. Ambrose Prep School understands its regulatory responsibilities and will maintain an effective oversight of this policy, by evaluating its effectiveness, and reviewing and implementing change.

This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS.

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1. Introduction

St. Ambrose Preparatory School will not tolerate any form of bullying including cyberbullying, and is particularly alert to the potential for bullying of those with “Protected Characteristics” (i.e. disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

All forms of bullying (including cyberbullying) are handled as an issue for the whole school. Measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils are in place and, equally importantly, we make it clear that bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for dealing with bullying and preventing bullying; it is underpinned by the Mission Statement and the aims of St Ambrose Preparatory School. The policy takes account of School values and principles that allow pupils to learn how to interact with others and encourages them to talk about bullying. By means of applying its anti-bullying policy, the School seeks to create an environment where opportunities to bully are limited.

The Anti-Bullying Policy is consistent with the principles that underpin our Equal Opportunities Policy and takes account of the Prevent Guidance and the non-statutory DfE advice “Preventing

and Tackling Bullying” (July 2017) and DfE document on Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and school staff (published Nov 2014).

This policy works alongside our Aims & Ethos, Safeguarding children policy, Health & Safety Policy, E-Safety Policy and Behaviour & Discipline Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and Special Educational Needs Policy.

It has been drawn up to conform with the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and has regard to:

- The DfE non-statutory guidance - Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)
- Cyberbullying advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)
- DfE Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying
- The DfE non-statutory guidance Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (2016)
- DfE Advice for Schools: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (May 2018)
- DfE Statutory Guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)
- DfE Statutory Guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)

2. Definitions

2.1. Bullying

Bullying is defined in DfE non statutory guidance - Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies.” July 2017 as follows: -

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences.”

3. Characteristics of Bullying (also see section on child-on-child abuse in the School's Safeguarding Policy)

3.1. Bullying

Bullying is a complex behaviour. It is the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else and is usually a behaviour which occurs repeatedly over time. The school understands the seriousness of bullying both physical and emotional which can cause psychological damage and even suicide in extreme cases. Whilst not a specific criminal offence, there are laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour.

The list below is not exhaustive but includes common types of bullying:

- Physical

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at etc.

- Verbal

Verbal abuse can take the form of name-calling. It may be directed towards race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disabilities, or because a child is adopted or is a carer.

- Via Technology (cyberbullying)

A child can be bullied via the internet and e-mail, online messaging and forums (social media). See Cyberbullying below

- Exclusion

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities with those they believe to be their friends.

- Damage to property or theft

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.

3.2. Cyberbullying

Childnet International, a UK-based charity working in partnership with various user groups, including children, parents and carers, child welfare services, police, government and policy

makers to help make the internet a safe place for children, offers the following definition:

“Cyberbullying, or online bullying, can be defined as the use of technologies by an individual or by a group of people to deliberately and repeatedly upset someone else.”

Cyberbullying can affect and involve all members of a school community – pupils, staff, parents and carers. The, impact, scale and scope, of cyberbullying can be greater than other forms of bullying. Cyberbullying, like other forms of bullying, affects self-esteem and self-confidence and can affect mental health and wellbeing, in the worst cases leading to self-harm and suicide.

Cyberbullying can differ from face-to-face bullying in several ways. These include:

- The profiles of the person carrying out the bullying and the person targeted.
- The access and location, the 24/7 any place nature of online bullying.
- The potential audience.
- The perceived anonymity of the person cyberbullying.
- The motivation of the person cyberbullying, some may not even be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- The digital evidence of cyberbullying, unlike other forms of bullying the target of cyber bullying will have evidence that it happened.

Cyberbullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or stalking (e.g., repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification and defamation; ostracism and peer rejection; impersonation; and forwarding or publicly posting private information or images. If an image is shared / posted without someone's consent then this can be considered to be an act of bullying, especially if it is forwarded to others.

Like other forms of bullying cyberbullying is often linked to discrimination, including on the basis of gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity or special educational needs and disabilities.

4. Aims of Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, including cyberbullying, and make each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school clear.

Are aims are:

- To create a climate in school whereby bullying behaviour is not accepted by any member of the school community, including parents.
- To implement strategies for all pupils, staff and parents to work towards the elimination of bullying.
- To establish effective procedures to identify and deal with bullying if and when it occurs.
- To make use of the curriculum to raise awareness of what bullying is and the school's expectations.
- To provide on-going support and counselling for both victims and bullies.
- To involve outside professional agencies if and where necessary and helpful.
- To identify and record patterns in behaviour or personnel involved that may indicate bullying

5. Prevention

The school curriculum is an important vehicle for activities designed to prevent an incidence of bullying and every opportunity will be taken to use it to counter bullying and reinforce the school ethos of good behaviour and respect for others. Examples of these opportunities include:

- Assemblies
- PSHE lessons
- Circle Time
- Rewards and Sanctions (as stated in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy)
- Parental involvement

These can all be a means of helping with assertiveness, self-esteem, self-awareness, awareness

of others, co-operation and conflict. This is not an exhaustive list as teachers may use a range of strategies and areas in the curriculum.

As a school we:

- Promote good behaviour and require pupils to treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave at all times.
- Do not use teaching materials or equipment, which gives a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin or gender etc.
- Lead by example to demonstrate how our actions affect others. Staff and older pupils set a good example to the rest.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people.
- Encourage children to report bullying, including cyberbullying and bullying outside school, to any member of staff. We reassure children that the matter will be treated seriously.
- Raise awareness of staff through regular behaviour reviews & specific training.
 - Pupil behaviour matters are discussed weekly in staff meetings.
 - We regularly review the School Policy, its implementation and its degree of success.
 - Staff are alert to the effect any form of bullying can have and are especially alert to where it may have a severe impact.
 - All staff keep up to date with their understanding of the principles of this policy and their legal responsibilities in regard to preventing, dealing with and recording incidents of bullying.
 - Staff receive regular training on: recognising signs and symptoms of bullying and cyberbullying, identifying action to resolve and prevent problems and knowing how to access sources of support.
 - Staff are aware that bullying may take place outside school or online as well as in school and that action must be taken. This will send a strong signal to pupils that bullying will not be tolerated and perpetrators will be held to account.
 - All staff are aware that bullying can happen to all children but some are more vulnerable to bullying than others because they may be perceived as being different.

- All staff know that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- Work with parents and guardians.
 - School seeks opportunities at parent meetings to discuss how parents can assist in preventing bullying.
 - We involve parents and make sure pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
 - Parents play a key role in the management of incidents of bullying and all parents are expected to support the School's Anti Bullying Policy.
 - Any parent who suspects that their child may be being bullied or is involved in bullying other children should speak to their child's Class Teacher.
 - Parents should encourage their child to talk to their Class Teacher about problems they are experiencing with other children.
 - Parents should encourage their child to talk to their Class Teacher about their involvement (including when they have found themselves a bystander) in the bullying of other children.
- Raise awareness of pupil responsibilities.

The school E-Safety Policy includes guidance designed to keep children safe and each child, and their parents must sign our "Acceptable Use of ICT" agreement.

We also teach children that:

- Bullying is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated
- Particular attention is drawn to issues around cyberbullying including that:
 - Although some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver.

- In cyberbullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators, e.g., by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. In this context 'bystanders' are better termed 'accessories' who actively support cyberbullying; children are warned this sort of behaviour will result in being disciplined in the same way as other bullies.
- Their actions have severe and distressing consequences, and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated.
- The responsibility for preventing bullying is shared with all adults and children involved in the School.
 - Children are expected to put into practice what they have learnt in School about anti-bullying and to make a positive contribution to the School and the happiness and safety of all the children within it.
 - Staff are available during the school day and before and after school.

6. Vulnerable Pupils

Bullying and cyberbullying can happen to all children and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. Some pupils, however, are more likely to be the target because of the attitudes and behaviours some have towards those who are different from themselves.

Children who may be vulnerable and at risk of bullying:

- Children with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act (i.e., disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).
- Children who are perceived as different from their peers such as overweight or underweight, wearing glasses or different clothing, being new to a school or being unable to afford what children consider cool.
- Children who are perceived as weak or unable to defend themselves
- Children who are depressed, anxious or have a low self-esteem.
- Children who are less popular as others and have less friends
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) or EAL (English as an Additional

Language) children.

- Looked After Children.

As a school we are aware that bullying can also take place outside of school.

7. How we deal with bullying and cyberbullying

Whilst we do everything, we can to prevent bullying, we recognise that it can still happen. We will treat any form of bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.

We:

- Support any child who is bullied. We spend time talking to the child who has been bullied and we explain why the action of the child was wrong.

The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. It can include a quiet word from the Class Teacher, providing pastoral support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services.

- Have a firm but fair discipline structure and we endeavour to help the child involved in bullying other children to change their behaviour in future.
- If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the school may contact external support agencies.
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints or incidents and involve parents where necessary.
- Maintain an Incident Log and look for developing issues so that early action can be taken.
- Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying e.g., provide increased supervision at problem times.
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other.

7.1. Guidance for Parents/ Carers

It is vital that the school and parents/carers work together to ensure that all pupils understand

the serious consequences of anything that might be seen as cyberbullying.

- Parents/carers can help by making sure their children understand the school's policies and understand how seriously the school views these matters.
- Parents/carers should also explain the legal implications relating to cyberbullying issues.
- If parents/carers believe that their child is the victim of cyberbullying, they should save the offending material.
- If the incident falls in the holidays the school reserves the right to sure they have all the relevant information before anything is deleted
- Parents/carers should contact the Headteacher as soon as possible to take action against the bullying perpetrator.

Further guidance can be found in resources listed in section 10 - Useful Numbers and Websites below.

7.2. Guidance given to pupils

All pupils must hand their mobile phones into the school office at the beginning of each school day; this is a key element for keeping children safe from cyberbullying. Phone will be returned at the end of the school day.

We explain that being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or seeing nasty comments about you, your family members or friends on a website, can be really upsetting but there is help easily available. If a pupil or a friend of a pupil receives an abusive e-mail or text, they should report the matter to a member of staff as soon as possible, who will then alert the Headteacher. Children are told that no matter how upsetting these messages may be, they should not delete messages, they should never retaliate or reply.

7.3. Procedures to Follow

Our aim is to provide a secure environment where pupils can report any incident confidently knowing that it will be taken seriously.

- Any bullying incident is recorded on CPoms by class teachers and the Head is alerted to the incidents.
- Any incidents of bullying or cyberbullying based on protected characteristics (i.e.

Disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) will be noted on this record. This enables the school to monitor its success in its aims to instill its values of tolerance and respect.

- The Headteacher reports to staff termly on the effectiveness of behaviour management within the school at which time any patterns of behaviour, person/s can be identified and acted upon
- The Headteacher will report annually to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of behaviour management within the school at which time any patterns of behaviour, person/s can be identified and acted upon.
- Staff are aware that a bullying incident should be treated as a safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Any safeguarding concerns relating to bullying or cyberbullying must be referred to the DSL (Ms Heron or deputy DSL Ms Aldridge, Mrs Cooke and Miss O'Sullivan (see safeguarding policy which includes guidance on how external agencies such as the police and children's social care service are notified if deemed necessary).

8. Investigating Cyberbullying

All school staff can require a pupil to reveal a message or show them other content on their phone for the purpose of establishing if bullying has occurred.

Staff can confiscate a pupil's property, including mobile phones if they are being used in contravention of the school's behaviour / anti bullying policy. In serious cases, where a device contains material that needs to be passed to the police, staff can confiscate and secure the device, for example by placing it in a locked draw. If images are discovered which cause concern staff must always confiscate the device. They must not look for further images or forward the images as this may constitute a criminal offence. They must report the matter to the Headteacher immediately and he will take the appropriate action.

School staff should not delete content which contains written material which has been used to upset or bully others but may ask a pupil to delete offensive or upsetting content, and confirm they have done so after the matter has been dealt with.

(Note: Detailed further guidance for Staff can be found in Ref. 3-Cyberbullying:

Understanding, Prevent and Respond. Guidance for schools.)

8.1. Searching electronic devices

All school staff in England can search learner-owned devices with the consent of the pupil. School staff will not search through electronic devices unless it is unavoidable and will exercise regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (See Ref. 4 - Searching, screening and confiscation) when determining what is a “good reason” to examine or erase the data or files. They must reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm or break the school rules.

Where text or images that contravene the school’s policy or the law are visible on a device, staff will act on this. If inappropriate material is found on the device, the Headteacher will decide whether they should delete that material, retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline) or whether the material is of such seriousness that it requires the involvement of the police.

8.2. Preserving the evidence

Pupils and staff are advised to try to keep a record of abusive incidents, particularly: the date and time, the content of the message(s), and where possible a sender’s ID (e.g., username, email, mobile phone number) or the web address of the profile/content.

Taking an accurate copy, preferably a screenshot (an image which captures what you can see on the screen) – where this is legal, or record of the web-page URL will help the service provider to locate the relevant content.

Keeping evidence will help in any investigation into the cyberbullying by the service provider, but it can also be useful in showing what has happened to those who may need to know, including parents, carers, and teachers.

Digital evidence can be captured in a range of ways and it is important to beware of issues that can have an important effect on the outcome of any investigation. Detailed information can be found in Ref. 3 - Cyberbullying: Understanding, Prevent and Respond. Guidance for schools. Some key issues to be aware of and reminders are given below:

- Save evidence by taking a copy of what appears on the screen (a screenshot)

- Mobile phone messages, whether voice, image or text, should be saved.
 - Messages that have been forwarded, for example to a staff member's school phone, won't include all of the information from the message, like the original sender's phone number.
- On a phone, Flight Mode will take the device offline. Evidence cannot be deleted remotely while it remains disconnected.
- Some Instant Messaging services allow the user to record all conversations, if these can be used it provides excellent evidence. Copied and pasted conversations are less useful as evidence, as these could be edited.
- On social networking sites, video-hosting sites, or other websites, keep the site link, print page or produce a screenshot of the page and save it.
- In chatrooms, print the page or take a screenshot of the page.
- Emails can be printed or forwarded to the person investigating the incident. Preserving the whole message, and not just the text, is more useful as this will contain information about where the message has come from.

8.3. Management of Incidents

Our aim is to provide a secure environment where pupils can report any incident confidently knowing that it will be taken seriously.

If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses.

Staff will always be available to:

- Listen to any concerns and take action.
- Investigate any allegation as soon as possible.
- Respond appropriately and consistently in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- Inform the Headteacher of incidents they feel are of a serious nature.
- Record the incident on CPoms.

8.4. Follow up

If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

- Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:
- We support the victims in the following ways:
- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experiences with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
- Informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- We also discipline, yet try to help the bullies in the following ways:
- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Informing the bullies' parents/guardians.
- By continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- The School recognises that pupils who bully may also be being bullied themselves or may be being abused. Appropriate support will be offered as required.

8.5. Disciplinary Steps

By taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying. We would envisage that steps 3, 4 and 5 would only be used in the case of serious incidents.

- Offenders will be warned officially to stop offending.
 1. Informing the bully's parents/guardians.
 2. If they do not stop bullying, they will be suspended for a minor fixed period (one or two days).
 3. If they then carry on, they will be recommended for suspension for a major fixed period (up to five days) or an indefinite period. The Headteacher will be in consultation with the Governing Body.
 4. If they will not end such behaviour, they will be recommended for permanent exclusion (expulsion).
 5. Any instances of Cyberbullying will result in an immediate two days suspension.

6. The Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors and a decision will be made to contact the police or social care if it is assessed that the child is believed to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

This Policy relies on the whole school community working together to eradicate bullying of all types.

It is the responsibility of:

- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- Governors, the Headteacher, Teaching and Non-Teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

9.1. The role of governors

The governing body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

9.2. The role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will take overall responsibility for the coordination and implementation of cyberbullying prevention and response strategies.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher:

- Reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- Ensures that all children understand the definition of bullying, know that it is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school.
- Ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.
- Works collaboratively with all teaching staff to ensure that this policy is upheld.
- Regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy with staff and if necessary, makes changes to improve processes.
- Sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, making bullying less likely.

9.3. The role of teachers

- Teachers support all children in their class and establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.
- Teachers take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep a record, as described in this policy, on of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school.
- If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the school informs the child's parents.
- Teachers must take action if they hear of bullying that occurs outside lesson time, either near the school or on the children's way home or to school or online.
- If teachers become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, it must be dealt with immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and consequences for the child who has carried out the bullying.

10. Useful Numbers and Websites

- Children's Legal Centre

(Free legal advice on all aspects of the law affecting children and young people):
0845 120 2948

- Anti-Bullying Alliance. www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/aba-our-work/.

A coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve our vision to: stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

- Bullying UK (part of Family Lives) www.bullying.co.uk/ Help line 0808 800 222

A comprehensive site containing general information about bullying (www.direct.gov.uk) contains Government issued advice and information about bullying

- Digizen.org

- www.digizen.org/cyberbullying/ has further information on cyberbullying

- Child Net International: www.childnet.com/

Provide specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

- Childline offers free confidential help with bullying. Tel: 0800 1111 or visit www.childline.org.uk/

- NSPCC provides a national 24hr helpline. Tel: 0808 800 5000 or visit www.nspcc.org.uk/

- Kidscape provide advice on dealing with bullying. Visit www.kidscape.org.uk/

- Tel: 020 7823 5430 for Parent Helpline

11. References:

Ref. 1. Preventing and tackling bullying - advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies. July 2017	Department for Education
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Ref. 2. Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff. 2014	Department for Education
Ref. 3. Cyberbullying: Understanding, Prevent and Respond. Guidance for schools. 2016	Childnet International
Ref. 4. Searching, screening and confiscation Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies.	Department for Education

12. Appendix 1 – Factors associated with prejudice-based bullying

12.1. Additional Support Needs

These can arise for any reason and be of short or long-term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors, and therefore may relate to a protected characteristic. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and crucially being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

12.2. Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Some bullying behaviour against these groups may be of a racist nature which, given that race is a protected characteristic, can contravene equality legislation and have hate crime implications. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and, given that race is a protected characteristic, understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

12.3. Body Image and Physical Appearance

This can be hugely important to children and young people with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact on their wellbeing. In some cases, body image and physical appearance may relate to a protected characteristic, such as race or disability.

12.4. Disability

Disability is a Protected Characteristic. People who bully others may see disabled children and young people as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The language and behaviour used may be a result of a lack of understanding about the nature of a person's disability. Increased knowledge and understanding about disability and the impact it can have can help reduce bullying.

12.5. Gender Identity and Transphobic Bullying

The term 'transgender' is an umbrella term for those whose gender identity or expression differs in some way from the sex that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, neither or aspects of both. Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic.

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways including transphobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying if someone is perceived to be transgender or if someone they are associated with, is transgender, i.e., a parent, relative or other significant figure.

The term 'gender reassignment' is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010 and refers to those who propose to go through, are going through, or have gone through a process of gender re-assignment.

12.6. Gypsy/Travellers

Children and young people who are Gypsy/Travellers may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Some bullying behaviour against these groups may be of a racist nature which, given that race is a protected characteristic, can contravene equality legislation and have hate crime implications. Perceived risks about bullying and given that race is a protected characteristic parents' own experiences of discriminatory behaviour may lead to low levels of enrolment and poor attendance for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people as well as early exit from formal education. Other Traveller families, such as Roma, may have similar concerns.

12.7. Sexual Orientation, Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010. Bullying based on sexual orientation is largely motivated by prejudice towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people. Homophobic bullying is when a young person's actual or perceived sexual orientation is used to exclude, threaten, hurt, or humiliate them.

Any young person can be homophobically bullied, whether they are LGBT or not. Sometimes young people can be homophobically bullied because others think that they are LGBT, because they have LGBT family or friends or often because they are seen as different or not conforming to traditional gender stereotypes. Transgender children and young people can therefore also experience homophobic bullying.

Homophobic language and jokes around the school can create a climate of homophobia; for example, the use of the word 'gay' to mean sub-standard or uncool. This type of language should therefore be addressed.

12.8. Intersectionality

Understanding the different and unequal social and economic outcomes for particular groups, based on intersections between race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age. In the context of anti-bullying, it is important to understand the connection between the experience of belonging to one or more of these groups and a resultant inequality in attainment and wellbeing.

12.9. Looked After Children and Young People

Looked after children and young people are particularly vulnerable to bullying. Children can face bullying behaviour simply because they are looked after and seen in some way as 'different'. Children who are looked after away from home can also experience bullying behaviour in their residential care home, at school and in their community. Looked after children and young people may not always have a stable support network to turn to when experiencing bullying. For some children forming positive relationships with peers and adults can be more difficult due to their early childhood adversity. Developing trusting and supportive relationships between children and practitioners is required to address bullying of all forms and in all settings.

12.10. Marriage/Civil Partnership

Marriage and civil partnership are a protected characteristic. Whilst it is unlikely that a school-aged pupil will be in a same sex marriage or civil partnership and directly experience prejudice and discrimination as a result, there could be instances of indirect discrimination, for example, if the child or young person is associated with someone (parent, sibling, etc.) who is in a same sex marriage or civil partnership or in a same sex relationship. Marriage and civil partnership discrimination and prejudice can also affect children and young people in a variety of other settings, for example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

12.11. Racism and Race

Race is a protected characteristic. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture as well as their skin colour and accent. The status of the ethnic group a child belongs to (or people assume they belong to) in a school, community or organisation can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they are less valued and 'deserve' to be treated differently, or with less respect.

12.12. Religion or Belief

Religion or belief is a protected characteristic. Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths can lead to religious intolerance. Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may lead to bullying. People who have a religion or belief as well as those who do not, are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

12.13. Sectarianism

Most people understandably associate sectarianism with religion, which is a protected characteristic. The reality of prejudice however means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be.

12.14. Sexism and Gender

Sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment are all protected characteristics. Bullying in

the form of derogatory language and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a real man or a real woman. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity. Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are perceived not to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying.

Personality traits that do not fit into the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can lead to bullying because of the prejudice towards their perceived difference.

12.15. Socio-economic Prejudice

Bullying due to socio-economic status can take place in any community. Small differences in perceived family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, accents, belongings, clothing, etc. can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant socio-economic group. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent.

12.16. Young Carers

The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or 'fun stuff'. This can make it difficult for them to form relationships; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties.