

The Addressing Bullying In Schools Act (NI)

The legal definition of bullying within Northern Ireland Schools came into operation on the 1st September 2021

1

In this Act “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 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.

When Is it Bullying?

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying behaviour when, on the basis of the information gathered, **all the criteria listed below have been met:**

Is the behaviour intentional?



Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?



Is the behaviour repeated?



Is the behaviour causing physical or emotional harm?



Does the behaviour involve omission?
(*may not always be present)



While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying.

Note:

- Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Management Policy.
- However, on occasions we will be challenged to differentiate between inappropriate/unacceptable behaviours and those which do constitute bullying.

What to do if your child is being bullied

No parent likes to think about their child experiencing bullying or displaying bullying behaviour but the fact is, more than half of all children are involved – either as a target or witness. So, there’s a good chance you’ll have to deal with it at some point. If your child is being bullied there are things you can do to help them.

Key points:

Listen without getting angry or upset. Put your own feelings aside, sit down and listen to what your child is telling you so you can give them the best support

Never tell your child to hit or shout names back. It simply doesn't solve the problem and if your child is lacking confidence then it just adds to their stress and anxiety

Aim to work together with the school and make it clear that you are seeking the school's help in finding a solution.

Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils can report bullying by:

- Verbally- talking to a member of staff (Usually Form Teacher).
- Using CyberSyd (if available in your school)
- An app for young people to report bullying easily and confidentially from anywhere at anytime.



Any pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. MRLP schools want to ensure that pupils receive appropriate help and this is the focus of any such conversations.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Form Teacher

By writing a note to a member of staff (eg. in a homework diary)
or
By telephoning the school office.

Who can you tell if you see or know someone being bullied?

School adults	A family member
Parents or someone who looks after you	A trustworthy friend



Magherafelt Rural Learning Partnership

Anti-Bullying
Information for Parents and Pupils

MRLP is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils, free from bullying behaviours of any kind. Bullying of any kind is contrary to the ethos and values of MRLP and is unacceptable in school.