

Angus Anti-Bullying Policy

Updated February 2026



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1. Introduction

This policy is for Angus Council's Education and Lifelong Learning and Early Learning and Child Care settings and has been developed in line with 'Respect for All', the national approach to anti-bullying for children and young people which provides an overarching framework and context for all anti-bullying work in Scotland.

Addressing bullying is key to achieving the Scottish Government's ambition to make Scotland the best place to grow up for all our children and young people and is integral to many aspects of the refreshed National Performance Framework. When left unaddressed, bullying has the ability to undermine the national outcomes set out for children and young people's education, health and human rights.

Bullying is an issue of considerable scale: 31% of P5-S3 children self-reported bullying in 2021/22 nationally.

Bullying is a violation of children's rights and is incompatible with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, now enacted in Scots law.

This policy was originally developed in partnership with children and young people, their parents, carers, staff, and other agencies. It promotes a whole-school approach which places the values of respect and inclusion at the heart of its ethos. This will help to prevent bullying by creating an environment which fosters positive relationships, better behaviour and high expectations for all children and young people.

This policy acknowledges developments in technological communication and social media and the national legislative and policy landscape, including:

[Equality Act, 2010;](#)

[UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\);](#)

[UNCRC \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024;](#)

[Getting it Right for Every Child;](#)

[Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 \(Scottish Government, June 2017\),](#)

[Mobile phones: guidance for Scotland's schools and](#)

[Supporting Transgender Young People \(2017\).](#)

[Schools - violent, aggressive and dangerous behaviour: risk assessment guidance \(Scottish Government\)](#)

[Schools - fostering a positive, inclusive and safe environment: guidance \(Scottish Government\)](#)

[Schools - addressing racism and racist incidents: guidance \(Scottish Government\)](#)

This policy also takes into consideration the recommendations from the '[Think B4 You Type](#)' campaign. This campaign was developed in partnership between Angus Council, Respectme and NSPCC Scotland and was led by 16 young people from across Angus, who engaged young people, parents, carers, practitioners, as well as local government in renewed efforts to address online bullying – helping to contribute to positive relationships, behaviour change and cultures of respect in their communities.

Online bullying is as serious as bullying face to face and will be treated equally.

Online bullying is pervasive, viral and does not occur in a fixed place. It commonly exists in forms such as humiliating memes, unflattering images, secretive groups and behaviour which undermines, isolates or embarrasses others. Online bullying can blur the lines between school and community incidents and challenges the traditional roles and responsibilities of those who become aware of bullying behaviour.

This policy takes into account legal provisions designed to protect individuals from online harassment, abuse, and harm listed in [the legal framework and policy landscape](#) section of this document.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in response to national changes.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying should never be viewed as a normal or inevitable part of growing up. Adults are not expected to be the subject of abuse by colleagues or friends therefore it should not be any different for children and young people. Angus Council has adopted the national definition of bullying, as set out in [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People \(RfA\)](#):

"Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in."

"The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out." Respect for All, 2024

Schools will deal with a variety of behaviours on a daily basis. Some of these behaviours may be reported as bullying by a child or young person or their family. It is important to recognise that not all such behaviour will be bullying or should be treated as such. Behaviour is context specific and should be considered on a case-by-case basis. It will be necessary for staff to use their professional judgement to identify the differences between types of behaviour.

3. Rationale

The ability to learn is crucial in the ever-changing world of life and work. Schools and Early Learning and Child Care settings, in partnership with the wider community, have a key role in developing successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens, by providing the highest quality of learning and teaching experiences.

Following the introduction of the UNCRC Act, education authorities and schools have a legal duty to act in a way that meets the UNCRC requirements. Although there is not an express right not to be bullied within the UNCRC, a number of rights are upheld through the furtherance of anti-bullying work. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states the following rights:

- Article 2 - 'protection against discrimination'
- Article 19 - 'Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental). They must be given proper care by those looking after them'.
- Article 12 - the right 'to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously'

Angus Council supports all schools towards accreditation as Rights Respecting Schools as part of a rights-based approach to achieve its target in Learning for Sustainability.

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on a range of protected characteristics. Any bullying related to these characteristics is unacceptable. The protected characteristics within school settings defined in the Act are:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Sex
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

This policy also recognises other forms of prejudice and discrimination related to other characteristics, such as socio-economic or appearance-related bullying. More information about prejudice-based bullying can be found in the [glossary](#).

The purpose in supporting, promoting and maintaining an anti-bullying policy is to ensure that:

- Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults.
- Children and young people and their parents/carers will have the skills and resilience to prevent and/or respond to bullying appropriately.

- Every child and young person who requires help will know who can help them and what support is available.
- Adults working with children and young people will follow a consistent and coherent approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from Early Learning and Childcare onwards.

In doing so, we:

- Recognise that all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable
- Will ensure that there is a common understanding of what bullying is and where it takes place
- Equip young people with the necessary skills to respond to the behaviour and impact of bullying within school and the wider community
- Will support those who have been affected by bullying and those who have displayed bullying behaviours
- Recognise the impact on learning and health and wellbeing that social media and online bullying can have on children and young people
- Are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children and young people to participate without the fear of bullying
- Are committed to ensuring all schools foster positive, supportive relationships that protect and promote the social, emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of children and young people in their care
- Recognise that a positive school ethos is essential to the creation of an anti-bullying culture
- Will fulfil our public sector equality duty

Our schools place the values of respect and inclusion at the heart of their ethos which helps to prevent bullying by creating an environment which fosters positive relationships, better behaviour and high expectations for all children and young people.

Bullying behaviour impacts on children's and young people's health and wellbeing and can affect their levels of participation, attainment and inclusion in school life. Children should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included at school and in the wider community.

The evidence base

Bullying is a ubiquitous, global problem; **one in three** students had been bullied by their peers at school in 2019.

UNESCO 2019



In Scotland, **31%** of pupils in P5-S3 had been bullied in the 2021/22 academic year. Of those who had been bullied in that year, **82%** experienced bullying at school and **36%** experienced bullying online.

Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021/22

The percentage of children reporting they had been bullied in 2021/22 decreased from P5 to S3.



Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021/22



There were differences in where different age groups were bullied, with older children more likely than younger children to report having been bullied online.

Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021/22

Bullying was more commonly reported by children and young people in the most deprived communities than the least.

Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021/22

Although those in African / Caribbean or Black / Mixed or multiple minority ethnic groups, and Asian children and young people were less likely than average to report having been bullied in 2021/22, the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights 2022 report on racially motivated bullying found that **83%** of schools failed to record racially motivated bullying incidents.

Health and Wellbeing Census 2021-22

In general, displaying bullying behaviour is more prevalent amongst boys than girls.



Health Behaviour in School-aged Children 2021/22

Girls were more likely than boys to report having been bullied in the last year.

Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021/22

27% of teachers in secondary schools, and **6%** in primary schools had encountered pupils using digital technology abusively (e.g. malicious posting of comments, photos, videos) in the classroom at least once in the week preceding the survey.



2023 Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research

A higher proportion of students in Scotland reported experiencing a bullying act on at least a weekly basis (**10.6%**), slightly higher than the OECD average (**9.4%**).

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2022) report

The survey found around **one in 10 (11%)** boys and girls reported they had been bullied at school at least 2-3 times a month in the past couple of months.

Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children 2021/22

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Angus Council will:

- Support schools to implement this policy
- Encourage an ethos of openness, honesty and transparency
- Work in partnership with school communities in terms of prevention and intervention in relation to bullying behaviour
- Provide training and support to address bullying behaviour in all its forms
- Take account of bullying behaviour presented by advances in technological communication
- Ensure schools in line with Angus Council's policy, review their existing anti-bullying policies and procedures every three years
- Monitor data regularly to inform practice in relation to preventing and responding to bullying

Schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings will:

- Develop their own anti-bullying policy and ensure that it is reviewed every three years thereafter
- Respond to all observed and reported allegations and complaints in relation to bullying within five working days of notification
- Take account of bullying behaviour presented by advances in technological communication such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Discord, etc. [The 360 Degree Safe Scotland self-review tool](#) is free to use and is intended to help schools review their online safety policy and practice.
- Ensure all members of the school community are aware of the anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Identify a senior member of staff who has responsibility for co-ordinating anti-bullying practice and procedures
- Record and report bullying behaviour allegations and incidents through the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module within 3 working days of the incident being reported
- Promote the importance of all members of the school community contributing to a positive ethos in which all individuals are respected regardless of difference or status. Opportunities should be sought to promote and celebrate diversity
- Recommend undertaking eLearning [Learning Academy | respectme](#)
- Undertake any other appropriate relevant continuous professional learning

All staff will:

- Be positive role models and work collaboratively to role-model and promote positive relationships and respectful behaviour
- Encourage children and young people to develop necessary skills such as self-awareness and self-esteem, coping strategies, assertiveness and resilience
- Listen and take children and young people seriously
- Engage with parents/carers
- Share concerns appropriately within their organisation/service and seek support where appropriate
- Take action to promote equality and diversity and children's rights
- Treat people with respect
- Understand and action local anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Act in accordance with relevant professional standards and codes of conduct

Parents/Carers are requested to:

- Be aware of anti-bullying policies and practice in any school/clubs/groups attended by their child
- Work collaboratively to help ensure bullying cannot thrive
- Share concerns about their child as early as possible with appropriate teacher/practitioner/coach
- Engage through school Parent Forum/Parent Council or other appropriate fora to contribute to and learn about anti-bullying practice
- Treat people with respect
- Promote and role-model positive respectful relationships
- Listen and take children and young people seriously

Children and Young People are encouraged to:

- Treat people with respect and not engage in bullying behaviour
- Be aware of anti-bullying policies and practices in schools/clubs/groups attended
- Challenge bullying behaviour, where safe and appropriate
- Share concerns with peers/trusted adults if appropriate to the individual
- Work collaboratively to help ensure bullying cannot thrive

5. Recognising Bullying Behaviour

“Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in.”

“The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.” Respect for All, 2024

- This behaviour can harm people mentally, emotionally, socially and physically.
- The actual behaviour (for example, actions, looks, messages, confrontations or physical interventions) does not always need to be repeated for it to have an ongoing impact. The fear of behaviour reoccurring may have a lasting impact.
- Bullying is more likely to take place in the context of an existing imbalanced relationship but may also occur where no previous or current relationship exists.
- Bullying may be carried out by an individual or can sometimes involve a group of people.

Bullying behaviours may include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened (face to face and/or online)
- Being hit, tripped up, pushed or kicked
- Having your belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, isolated, leaving out others and spreading rumours (face to face and/or online)
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phones/tablets.
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online).
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online)
- Increasing the reach and impact of bullying or prejudice through the recruitment and/ or involvement of a wider group.

Online bullying is pervasive, viral and does not occur in a fixed place. It commonly exists in forms such as humiliating photos, unflattering images, secretive groups and behaviour which isolates or embarrasses others. Online bullying should be seen as related to **where** the bullying occurs, rather than as a different behaviour type.

The mental health consequences of bullying may include anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, sleep/ eating disorders, self-harm, somatic symptoms and suicidality. Bullying can have persistent effects into late adolescence and can contribute independently to mental health problems. Children and young people exposed to [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\)](#), highly stressful and potentially traumatic events that occur during childhood and adolescence, are at greater risk of either engaging in or experiencing bullying during adolescence.

Prejudice based bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice or is perceived to be motivated by prejudice and is most commonly associated with discriminatory language or behaviour.

Prejudice based bullying ([Glossary](#)) can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstances, including, but not restricted to:

- Body image
- Disability or additional support needs
- Gender and sexism
- Religion and belief
- Families on low income
- Care experienced children and young people
- Young carers

All prejudice-based bullying is unacceptable and incidents require to be appropriately recorded.

It is important that the umbrella term "prejudice-based bullying" should not lead to the dilution or avoidance of the issue of structural inequalities, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia, or prejudice and discrimination towards disability or faith. These can manifest themselves in many subtle and implicit behaviours, including microaggressions, misrecognition, implicit bias and othering, as well as structural and social inequalities.

Bullying is a breach of children's rights and it is every child's right not to be bullied.

In order to support all children and young people experiencing, displaying or involved bullying behaviour, and to effect behavioural change, labels such as 'victim' and 'bully' should be avoided. When adults can maintain focus on the behaviour itself and the impact it has had, rather than simply applying 'labels', it helps young people to understand what they did, why it was wrong and what is expected from them instead.

Respectme advises that 'the person on the receiving end of bullying behaviour' and 'the person displaying bullying behaviour' should be used.

Supporting pupils' awareness of safe, secure and respectful use of digital devices and services is an important means for a school to support the development of responsible and global citizens, recognising and respecting children's rights, and creating an anti-bullying culture. In schools, this learning can be delivered through the Curriculum for Excellence through the [Health and Wellbeing](#) and [Digital Literacy experiences and outcomes](#). [Mobile phone guidance for Scotland's schools](#) also sets out the features of a respectful and responsible use of mobile technology policy, including considerations for schools to support digital etiquette, digital rights and safe, responsible and secure use of mobile technology.

What bullying is not

It is recognised that behaviour will be context specific and should be considered on a case-by-case basis. In identifying what response is appropriate, it will often be necessary for staff to use their professional judgement to identify the nuanced differences between types of behaviour. Each set of circumstances will be fact specific, and staff should ensure they have gathered all relevant information before making a determination, remembering that the nature of some behaviours may constitute criminal offences, and advice should be sought from Police Scotland where there are significant concerns.

Differentiating bullying from conflict

It may be possible to differentiate conflict from bullying by having regard to the relationships and dynamics involved. Conflict is normal and can happen in healthy, happy, equal relationships. Usually at least one party involved does not want the conflict to continue unresolved and will try to take early action to make amends and improve the situation. Healthy relationship conflict is not the same as bullying and is unlikely to lead to bullying as the people involved have a vested interest in restoring equilibrium and staying connected to each other.

There are a range of interventions and processes available in Angus that may help to support children and young people involved in conflict, such as [restorative approaches](#), the use of Wellbeing Webs and wellbeing indicators, whole school approaches to support emotional literacy and regulation such as Zones of Regulation, Emotion Works or Decider Skills, Health and Wellbeing curriculum related activities to support relationships such as [Health and Wellbeing Responsibility of All](#), the [Health and Wellbeing aspect of the curriculum](#) and learning in [Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood \(RSHP\)](#) education. Children and young people and families should be involved in identifying appropriate interventions to ensure their wellbeing is being supported.

Differentiating bullying from potentially criminal behaviour

The nature of some behaviours reported or perceived as bullying may include behaviour that is criminal in nature such as:

- Physical behaviour: peer-on-peer violence which can have both short and long-term impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing of all involved may amount to assault.
- Sexual behaviour: when someone is coerced or pressurised to do something sexual or is touched inappropriately, this is not bullying, this is sexual assault or abuse and a form of gender-based violence (GBV)
- Online behaviour: Some online behaviours may be illegal where they amount to online harassment, abuse, and harm.
- Hate crime: In the case of hate crime, prejudice-based behaviour must be motivated by malice and ill-will towards a group of people due to a relevant characteristic or intended to stir up hatred, and be criminal in nature, such as assault, graffiti or a breach of the peace.

It is not for staff to determine if behaviour is criminal; they should seek immediate support from Police Scotland if they have reason to believe that a crime may have occurred or that a child or young person has been seriously harmed. It should also be noted that under The Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019, a child under the age of 12 cannot be arrested, charged or prosecuted for a crime. However, Police Scotland may still be involved.

CONFLICT

Usually at least one person does not want the conflict to go on unresolved and will try to take action to improve the situation. It can highlight the importance of the relationship, providing a chance to build on strengths, solve problems, and move forward positively.

Healthy relationship conflict is not the same as bullying and is unlikely to lead to bullying as the people involved have a mutual interest in restoring equilibrium and maintaining connection.

BULLYING

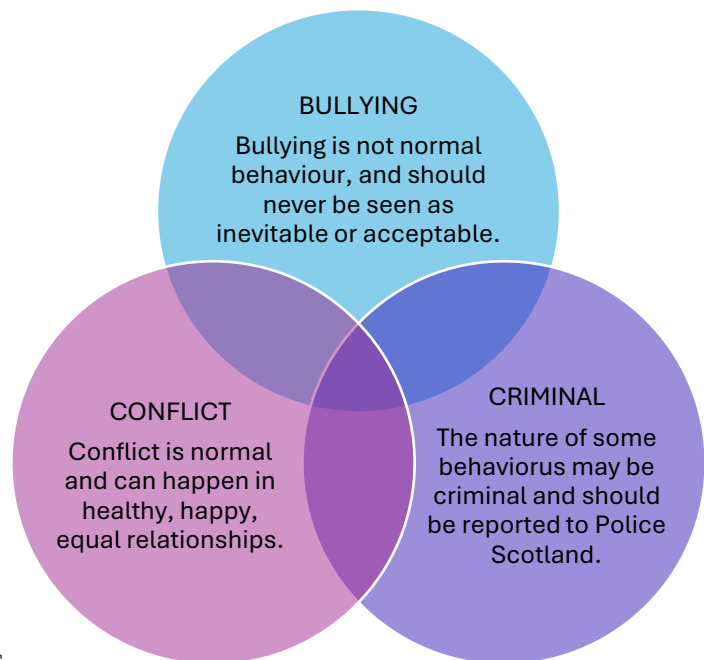
Bullying occurs within social relationships and typically involves an imbalance of power that allows a relationship of dominance and subordination to emerge. Bullying can be intentional or unintentional, occurring once or repeatedly.

Resolution usually requires adult support, meaningful intervention and a change of behaviour in the instigating person. There can sometimes be an escalation from bullying to violence.

CRIMINAL

While bullying is not in itself a crime, some behaviour that may be reported or perceived as bullying could constitute a criminal offence, such as physical or sexual violence, online behaviours or hate crime.

It is not for staff to determine if behaviour is criminal; they should seek immediate support from Police Scotland if they have reason to believe that a crime may have occurred or that a child or young person has been seriously harmed.



6. Bullying Behaviour – Prevention and Intervention

The overarching ethos of any school or organisation should make it clear that bullying is never acceptable and that all adults, children and young people must understand the role that they play in addressing bullying. Establishing the right culture is at the heart of creating an environment where bullying cannot thrive. A strongly promoted whole-school policy, which is widely understood by all members of the school community and evident in the school ethos, will help to prevent bullying behaviour.

Prevention

- Anti-bullying should be seen as the responsibility of all staff, who should model positive and respectful relationships and promote a culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable
- Training and support should be provided to ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in relation to anti-bullying
- Ensure safety and supervision in areas where children and young people congregate such as the playground, corridors and social areas
- Plan pro-active strategies e.g. anti-bullying weeks/days, assemblies, parents, carers nights, posters to be displayed etc.
- Use restorative and solution-oriented approaches to build, maintain, and repair relationships within the school community. Peer mediation can help prevent and deal with certain types of bullying behaviour but should be carefully implemented and monitored to ensure support is available for all
- Discuss anti-bullying (including what bullying is and what the impact is), where appropriate, through the curriculum. Use of art, literature, drama and role-play can be particularly effective
- Ensure staff are trauma informed with an understanding of the pervasive impact of trauma and work collaboratively to prevent re-traumatisation, promote recovery and support resilience.

Intervention

No matter how effective prevention strategies are, there are times when incidents will occur and staff should feel confident about how to resolve bullying behaviour.

Whenever a child or young person feels bullied, victimised, distressed or 'got at' by others, intervention procedures should be instigated promptly. In determining if bullying has taken place and the action that needs to be taken, the main issue to be taken into consideration is how the bullying behaviour has made that child or young person feel.

The most effective way to structure a response to bullying is to ask these questions:

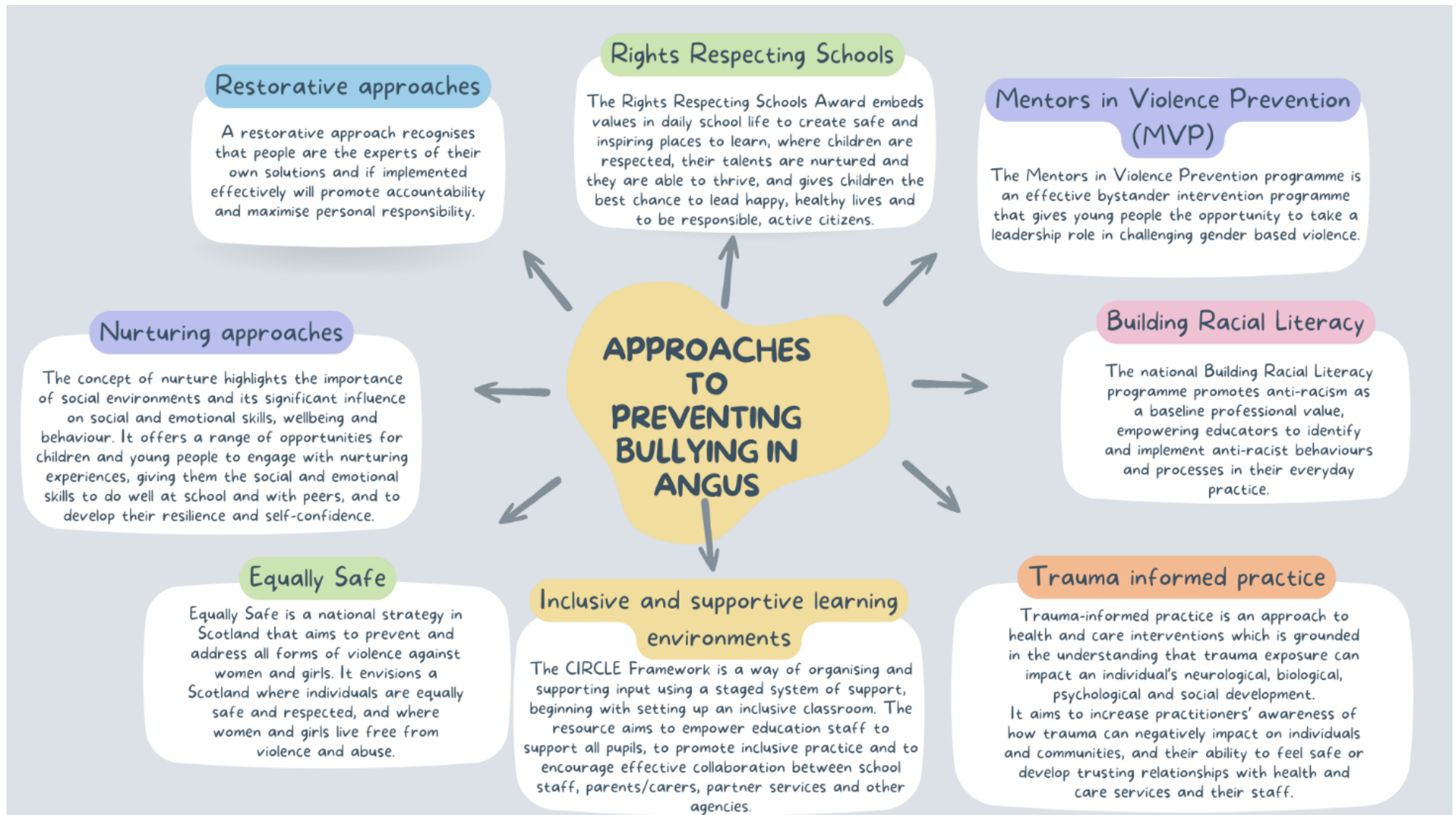
- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What does the child or young person want to happen?
- What do I need to do about it?
- What attitudes, prejudice or other behaviours have influenced the behaviour?

Children and young people told us (Angus Council, 2019) they wanted to be listened to and taken seriously when they told adults their concerns. It was very important to them that action be taken to address the bullying behaviour.

Children and young people often feel that bullying has 'taken something away from them' and the role of the adult is to work with them to help restore their feeling of control. Listening carefully to their story and talking through options and alternatives in how to respond can help the child or young person feel they are being taken seriously and are taking back control.

School staff can also approach their Educational Psychologist or Principal Teacher ASN Locality 3-18 for consultation and advice.

Preventative approaches implemented across schools in Angus



6.1 Responding to bullying: Reporting, recording, monitoring, and investigation of bullying incidents

Reporting

Schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings will provide a number of ways in which alleged incidents of bullying behaviour can be reported by children and young people, including discreet or anonymous reporting mechanisms e.g. QR codes, confidential electronic mailbox, physical postbox, or Google forms. Each setting will ensure that children, young people and parents/carers are aware of how concerns can be raised.

Recording

Any incidents that are observed or reported will be recorded within 3 working days through the Bullying and Equalities menu within the Click+Go application in SEEMIS containing the following information:

- The children and young people involved, as well as staff or other adults
- Where and when bullying has taken place
- The type of bullying experienced, e.g. name-calling, rumours, threats etc.
- Any underlying prejudice including details of any protected characteristic(s)
- Consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns
- Actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level.

It is not necessary for an allegation to be substantiated before being recorded.

Incidents involving children with Additional Support Needs should also be recorded on SEEMIS, with recognition that the behaviour exhibited may be a manifestation of the child's needs.

Guidance for schools on recording on the Bullying and Equalities module on SEEMIS can be found on [Angus DigilLearn](#).

Monitoring

Recording and monitoring of bullying incidents is essential and can provide valuable information on the scope and scale of the issue in order to guide improvements in policy and practice and inform antibullying interventions. In addition, the data can help identify numerical trends, specific issues around equality and diversity and other relevant data/patterns, which may help schools and the local authority to address bullying incidents effectively. Schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings should work in partnership with parents, learners and staff to agree a shared definition of bullying within their school community. This will help to strengthen approaches to recording and support monitoring of alleged incidents of bullying.

Data monitoring locally will support the improvement of targeted support and interventions that can be applied in a focused, responsive way, recognising the unique nuances of geography and demographics.

Data will be monitored regularly by the local authority.

Approaches to monitoring and recording should also take into consideration children and young people's rights outlined in the UNCRC including Article 12: Children and Young People have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously, and Article 16: Children and Young People have the right to a private life.

Investigation and responding

Staff in Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools will assess the impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people involved in a bullying incident, acting in accordance with the Angus [Child Protection in Schools](#) guidance, using the intervention questions listed at the beginning of this section. Once the investigation is concluded and the outcome recorded, if the incident is found to be bullying, schools should record what supports have been put in place for **all** the children and young people involved.

Responses should be framed by Getting It Right for Every Child processes.

Responses to prejudice-based bullying should include proactive challenge of the root causes of different forms of prejudice through the [Four Contexts for Learning](#) as well as provision of pastoral care for those who have experienced prejudiced-based bullying, consistent responses from staff to manifestations of prejudice, and provision of mechanisms to prevent re-occurrence.

Responses to online bullying should include supporting young people to use platform safety settings, support from an emotional/ relationships perspective, signposting to expectations in the school's policy regarding communications online and offline, as well as following Child Protection Guidance.

6.2 Developing an Anti-Bullying Policy

Early Learning and Childcare settings and School policies should foster:

The creation of a positive ethos which nurtures positive personal identities and challenges stereotypes, promotes equality, and creates an environment where children and young people, parents/carers and all school staff work in partnership to listen and respond to children's views within a physically and emotionally safe environment

The development of a curriculum which promotes personal safety and wellbeing by raising awareness among children and young people of behaviours which are acceptable and those which are not

The promotion of positive social relationships, by helping children and young people to develop the personal and interpersonal skills to safeguard themselves against incidents of bullying behaviour

A commitment to provide appropriate responses and interventions for children involved in bullying behaviour

The maintenance and development of staff knowledge and skills by providing access to appropriate training courses, materials and resources

And should acknowledge that:

Bullying behaviour taking place out with the school grounds and out with the school day can impact on the life of children and young people. Schools have a part to play in addressing the impact of incidents of bullying behaviour which occur en route to and from school.

A model policy template can be accessed on the [respectme website](#) for further support,

7. Early Learning and Childcare Settings and Schools Anti-Bullying Policy Development

Personal safety and issues of bullying behaviour require priority attention in all schools. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour is the responsibility of all members of a school community - children and young people, staff, parents/carers.

Schools must have in place procedures to address bullying behaviour and it is essential that all children and young people, staff, parents/carers are aware of these procedures.

Schools should follow the following when developing and revising their own policy and procedures:

(i) Management and Co-ordination

A senior member of staff should be involved in the development of anti-bullying procedures. All staff, children and young people, parents/carers and support agencies should have knowledge and understanding of anti-bullying procedures, thus ensuring a consistent whole-school approach. The procedures will require to be reviewed every three years.

(ii) Support for Children and Young People

- Schools have a responsibility to provide effective support to those who have been affected by bullying and those who have displayed bullying behaviours.
- Particular attention must be given to supporting vulnerable individuals and children and young people with Additional Support Needs.
- The circumstances and needs of individual children and young people must be taken into account when deciding on the approach to be adopted in resolving incidents of bullying behaviour.
- The ethos of all schools should be such that children and young people know that "it is all right to tell" about bullying behaviour.

(iii) Parents/carers

- Involving parents/carers in the process of the review, development and implementation of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy will assist their understanding and support of the policy in practice.
- All parents/carers should be able to access the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, know who to contact, and be aware of the procedures which are followed in resolving incidents of bullying behaviour. This can be achieved by ongoing awareness raising, and by making the policy easily accessible.
- When parents/carers approach the school about incidents of bullying behaviour or concerns, they must be listened to with empathy and respect.
- All concerns about bullying behaviour must be taken seriously. Listening to their point of view will help them to hear and understand the school's point of view.
- Feedback in response to observed and reported bullying should be within five working days.
- Schools should refer to the Respectme website, www.respectme.org.uk for information and advice for parents/carers.

(iv) Children and young people

- Anti-Bullying is an essential part of learning and teaching within the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence.

- Children and young people should be actively involved in the process of the review, development and implementation of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. This will assist their understanding and support of the policy, practice and procedures.
- All children and young people have a responsibility to contribute to the positive ethos and values of the school and to behave in a respectful manner towards one another.
- Children and young people should be involved in all decisions affecting them and understand what is happening and why.
- Children and young people should be supported to retain as much control as possible in any action taken about them.
- Their confidentiality should be respected.
- If you have a child protection or wellbeing concern, let the young person know that you will need to follow child protection procedures, and share information with the relevant staff or agency.

(v) Staff

- A school's culture should make it clear that bullying behaviour is never acceptable and should support all adults and children and young people in achieving this ethos.
- Staff should be continuously aware of the influence they have on children and young people and be expected to display appropriate, respectful behaviour towards one another, children and young people and parents/carers.
- Day-to-day practices should reflect the message that bullying behaviour is never acceptable and should be continuously reinforced in all the work undertaken by staff.
- Staff responses when dealing with children and young people who are involved in incidents of bullying behaviour are vitally important. The response should be consistent, regardless of who the child or young person approaches.
- Incidents of bullying behaviour should be viewed individually. Staff should be aware of the range of positive interventions and strategies available.

8. Prejudice-based bullying

This section provides information regarding different forms of prejudice-based bullying behaviour. This includes those related to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 as well as broader characteristics or circumstances which may be the target of bullying behaviours.

Equality Act 2010

There are nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- [age](#)
- [disability](#)
- [gender reassignment](#)
- [marriage and civil partnership](#)
- [pregnancy and maternity](#)
- [race](#)
- [religion or belief](#)
- [sex](#)
- [sexual orientation](#)

Part 6 (chapter 1) of the Equality Act 2010, which deals with school education, does not apply to the protected characteristics of 'age' and 'marriage and civil partnership'.

Age: Part 6 (chapter 1) of the Equality Act 2010, which deals with school education, does not apply to the protected characteristic of 'age', however, people are protected from discrimination on the grounds of age in other settings including workplaces and further education.

Disability: the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Increased knowledge and understanding about disability and the barriers and challenges they can face can help reduce bullying. The language and behaviour used may be a result of a lack of understanding about the nature of a person's disability. People who bully others may see disabled people as being more vulnerable and less able to defend themselves or tell an adult about the bullying.

Gender reassignment: the term 'gender reassignment' is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and refers to those who propose to go through, are going through, or have gone through a process for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

The term 'transgender' or 'trans' is a term used to describe people whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Gender identity is a person's innate sense of their own gender.⁴⁹

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying.

Transphobic bullying is behaviour or language which makes a young person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of perceived or actual transgender identity or transgender expression. This can manifest in many ways including verbal abuse and slurs or deliberately mis-gendering them. A young person may also experience transphobic bullying if someone is perceived to be transgender or someone they are associate with is transgender, i.e. a parent, relative or other significant figure. The Scottish Government has published guidance on [Supporting Transgender Pupils in Schools](#), which includes information on transphobic bullying.

Marriage and civil partnership: Part 6 (chapter 1) of the 2010 Equality Act, which deals with school education, does not apply to the protected characteristic of 'marriage and civil partnership', however people are protected from discrimination on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership in other settings including workplaces and further education.

Pregnancy and maternity: young parents can experience bullying because of the stigma and judgement that is still associated with young parenthood. Staff should be aware of the increased possibility of bullying in relation to a young pregnant person or young parent and that this can occur face to face as well as online. Schools and organisations should be cognisant of their anti-bullying practice and approach and ensure young people receive adequate information and guidance around this topic. For those who are pregnant/young parents, this can add to what is already a potentially highly emotional and stressful time. The Scottish Government has published guidance on [Supporting young pregnant women and young parents in school](#).

Sexual orientation: bullying based on sexual orientation is largely motivated by prejudice towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people, and those sexual orientations or gender identities which are not heterosexual or heteronormative. Homophobic or biphobic 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 homophobic bullied, irrespective of their actual sexual orientation. Sometimes young people can be homophobic bullied because others think that they are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT), because they have LGBT family or friends or, often, because they are seen as different or not conforming to gender stereotypes. Transgender children and young people can therefore also experience homophobic bullying.

Homophobic or biphobic language and jokes around the school can create a climate of homophobia; for example, the use of the word 'gay' to mean substandard or have negative connotations. This type of language is prejudice-based and should therefore be addressed as part of a school culture and ethos which promotes equality and inclusion. Scottish Government and Time for Inclusive Education have produced [guidance for school staff to support the implementation of LGBT Inclusive Education](#).

Racism and race: under the Equality Act 2010, race includes colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins. Children and young people from groups who are at risk of experiencing racism may experience racist attitude and behaviour based on perceived differences which reflect wider societal patterns of inequality, power imbalance and discrimination. Prejudice towards the minority ethnic group a child or young person belongs to – or to which people assume they belong – in a school, community or organisation can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. Racist behaviour and incidents can arise from a

misguided and learned belief that children and young people from minority ethnic groups are less valued and 'deserve' to be treated differently, or with less respect.

Children and young people from Gypsy/Traveller communities may be at greater risk of bullying. 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 parents' own experiences of discriminatory and racist 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 and Roma families may have similar concerns.

[Resources](#) are available to support schools on responding to racism and racist incidents.

Religion or belief: people who have a religion or belief, as well as those who do not, are protected under the Equality Act 2010. Religious, belief- or faith-based discrimination may manifest through actions or words directed towards a person of faith or a faith community, for example, anti-Hinduism, antisemitism or anti-Sikh discrimination. Discrimination can also happen within groups who share the same religious belief, for example, Muslim or Christian sectarianism.

Prejudice may centre on aspects of traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths and can lead to religious intolerance. 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.

In some cases, racism is the underlying factor in religious discrimination against people from minority ethnic communities. For example, learners who are not Muslim may experience Islamophobic bullying or anti-Hinduism as a result of racially stereotypical assumptions linked to their skin colour or other aspects of their appearance.

Sex (including sexual harassment, sexism and misogyny): the Equality Act 2010 protects people from being treated differently because of their sex. Girls and young women can be subjected to a range of behaviours by boys and young men because of gender inequality. This includes sexism, misogyny, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Sexism is discrimination or discriminatory language which seeks to belittle women and girls. Misogyny is the hatred of women, often expressed with hateful, sexualised language which aims to imply that women are inferior. Sexism and misogyny create a context where GBV can thrive. Girls and young women often experience bullying which is based on sexism and misogyny. Girls experiencing more than one form of inequality are at higher risk of being subjected to misogyny, which can often be combined with racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other prejudices.⁵¹

Sexual harassment is distinct from the behaviours above and can include catcalling, wolf whistling, sexual language and sexualised intimidation or threat. It is important that sexual harassment is treated as GBV. The Scottish Government has published [guidance to support schools in preventing and responding to gender-based violence](#).

Many of these behaviours are caused by gender inequality – unequal social power between girls and boys – and create a context which can allow serious forms of violence to take place. It is often unseen and unreported.

Bullying which draws on misogyny can also be directed against boys and young men. For example, 'you throw like a girl'. Even when directed at boys, it still draws on the degradation and belittling of women and thus causes girls further harm. It can be linked to homophobia.

Other characteristics

The following characteristics may be the target of prejudice-based bullying; while they are not explicitly protected by law under the Equality Act 2010, there are aspects of the characteristics that may be caught depending on the circumstances. Irrespective of this, a robust response should be taken to any form of bullying. It is important for schools to consider whether there are patterns of bullying behaviour within their school communities which could be addressed by providing learning for children and young people about inequality and diversity.

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 a school 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. Some with additional support needs may be protected under the disability protected characteristic.

Children and young people with an additional support need may not realise that the behaviour happening to them is bullying. Staff should therefore be alert for behaviour that may constitute bullying, without the responsibility solely being on the child or young person to report it. Staff are able to report bullying incidents on SEEMiS without a child or young person reporting it.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees: children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying. 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 reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

Body Image and Physical Appearance: this can be hugely important to children and young people and significantly negatively impact their wellbeing. Body image and physical appearance can also be a highly sensitive area in which school staff will need to carefully consider their responses. In some cases, bullying relating to body image and physical appearance may intersect with a protected characteristic, such as race or disability, for example being bullied for female body/facial hair, facial deformities and scars (potentially from war/torture).

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

Family and household circumstances: children and young people may experience discrimination for their family situation. For example, if the child or young person is from a single-parent family, a blended family or has a relative who is in a same-sex

relationship. Bullying of children who endure parental substance use can also be prevalent.

Family imprisonment: children and young people affected by family imprisonment are at risk of bullying for a range of reasons. Keeping in contact with a family member in prison can mean children and young people miss time at school, clubs, and socialising with friends. Having to explain or make excuses for their absence can pose challenges for peer relationships. Children and young people affected by imprisonment can also often feel left out in peer discussions about parents or other family members. The stigma of having a family member in prison can lead to children and young people trying to keep the experience hidden from their peers. This can make it difficult to form and maintain peer relationships. Where children and young people choose to disclose their family member's imprisonment, or where this information is shared by others in the community or the media, the stigma of imprisonment can make them a direct target of bullying behaviour.

Forces children: children from armed forces and veteran families can face significant challenges due to forces life. They may experience frequent moves around the country which for some are challenging due to the loss of friendships and disruption to education. Deployments and separation from parents are also events that can happen due to forces life. Some families may move up to once every two years which means children and young people re-establishing themselves in a new school and some feel there is no point even trying to make new friends which can lead to isolation. This group can sometimes feel different from their classmates and can be bullied for a number of reasons such as having a different accent, or simply for being in a forces family. Having a parent being away can also add to the emotional difficulties a child or young person may feel as they may not want to open up about the difficulties they face to their non-serving parent. Research has shown that children who attend schools which are more educated about military life face less bullying and discrimination, so it is important schools understand their lives more and are able to support this group.

Mental health stigma and discrimination: children and young people may feel uncomfortable to speak about their mental health for fear of the consequences. Fear of [stigma and discrimination](#) can prevent an individual from sharing their mental health concerns. Judgemental preconceptions about mental health may endorse negative stereotypes which can impact someone who experiences mental health problems, potentially making them feel worse about themselves and hindering recovery.

Sectarianism: most people understandably associate sectarianism with religion, which is a protected characteristic. The reality of prejudice however means that family background, supporting particular football teams, where a child or young person lives, which school they attend or the colour of clothing they wear can be a target of sectarian abuse, regardless of the individuals' beliefs. In Scotland, sectarianism is most often related to Protestant and Roman Catholic divisions within Christianity but can also relate to other religions, for example, Sunni, Ahmadi and Shia Muslims within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform Jews within Judaism.

Socio-economic/poverty prejudice: poverty contravenes a number of articles laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and denies children and young people many of their rights.

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. Where poverty-related bullying is witnessed or experienced, it is based upon the consequences of poverty, such as: poor appearance or lack of school uniforms, shoes and PE kits; type of clothing worn on non-school uniform day; lack of money to socialise with friends, being in receipt of free school meals; and not being able to have 'sleepovers'. [Schools and organisations need to be aware and compassionate around both the emotional and financial consequences of poverty](#) and how it affects children and young people in all areas of their life.

Young Carers: the lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member or friend to illness, disability, mental health problems or an addiction. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Carers Trust survey work indicates that 36% of young carers who responded had been bullied about their caring role. Depending on their caring responsibilities, 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 and sustain relationships with peers; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to them not achieving their educational potential.

9. Resources for children and young people, parents/ carers, professionals and Career-Long Professional Learning opportunities

There are varied sources of training to support both understanding of and addressing bullying behaviour, both internal and external to Angus Council, with a number of national organisations and projects offering training. It is recommended that all practitioners complete the foundation courses 'Understanding Bullying' and 'Responding to Bullying' available on the [respectme Learning Academy](#) (these 2 courses are also open to parents and carers).

In addition to this, the sharing of good practice cannot be understated and should be considered as part of Career-Long Professional Learning.

The list of opportunities and resources below is not exhaustive.

Angus Council offers a number of online learning modules through the [Always Learning](#) platform such as:

- Getting it Right for Every Child in Angus
- Promoting Equality and Diversity
- Equalities
- Protecting Children in Scotland
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Trauma Informed Practice

Further sources of information and support:

1. Supports for children and young people

[respectme](#), has information available for children and young people to help them understand what bullying is, and what their options are if they are being bullied.

[Childline](#) offers direct emotional and practical support for children and young people about bullying at school or any other issues. Childline can also be contacted free on 0800 11 11.

[Young Scot](#) provide a range of information to build young people's understanding of what they can do if they are being bullied, including [support for online bullying](#).

[Reach](#) provides information and advice to children and young people who have, or might have, an additional support need on their rights.

2. Supports for parents/ carers

[Connecting Parents Angus](#) - This website is for all parents and carers with parental responsibility in Angus. It provides access to a wide variety of services who support families and their child's education.

[respectme](#) has a range of information resources and training opportunities to increase parent awareness of bullying behaviour and to consider the different ways they can respond if their child is being bullied or is involved in the bullying of others. These resources also offer guidance on how schools and parents can work together to create inclusive environments and provide effective support for children and young people.

[ParentLine Scotland](#) can help parents or family members think about the best way to deal with a situation where their child is being bullied or is displaying bullying behaviour. ParentLine Scotland can also be contacted free and in confidence on 0800 028 2233.

[Parentclub](#) provides information to support parents where their child is being bullied at school.

[Connect](#) works with parents, parent groups and educators, providing information, advice and training.

[National Parent Forum of Scotland](#) is a volunteer-led organisation that works to ensure that parents play a full and equal role in education.

[Enquire](#) provides advice for parents of children who have, or might have, an additional support need.

Coordinated by the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER), Advocacy for Race Equality in Schools Scotland (AdRESS) is an advocacy and advice service launched to support parents and carers whose child has experienced racist incidents or racially motivated bullying in school.

Enquiries can be made by telephone on 0330 122 4600 or by email at support@adresscotland.org. They can also be submitted through the online contact form on the AdRESS website (www.AdRESScotland.org) where further information and resources can also be found.

The [NSPCC](#) has published advice for parents on [keeping children safe online](#).

3. Supports for schools/ organisations and education authorities

[respectme](#)

Support and guidance are available from respectme which offers free training to all those with a role to play in the lives of children and young people to prevent and respond to bullying effectively, aligned to 'Respect for All'.

respectme have developed a template anti-bullying policy which can be adapted by schools, organisations or education authorities to meet their local circumstances. The template policy can be accessed from [respectme's website](#).

[AngusDigilearn](#) – Guidance and Policies – In this section you will find Policy, Guidance and Procedures relating to schools and learning.

Scottish Government

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published key guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty:

[Equality Act 2010: guidance](#)

[Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty for Scottish public bodies](#)

[Equality and Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in Scotland](#)

The Scottish Government has published key guidance and resources to support schools:

[Preventing and responding to gender-based violence: a whole school framework](#)

[Resources to support schools when responding to racism and racist incidents](#)

[Supporting transgender young people in schools: guidance for Scottish schools](#)

[Guidance on mobile phones in Scotland's schools](#)

Keeping Trauma in Mind by Education Scotland aims to help create a trauma informed and responsive education workforce that is capable of recognising where people affected by trauma and adversity and to be able to respond in ways that prevent further harm and support recovery.

respectme and LGBT Youth Scotland resource for schools and organisations on effectively challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia

respectme – free online [anti-bullying training](#) and resources

SEEMiS has developed technical guidance and a short video to support school staff who are responsible for inputting data into the module.

Education Scotland training on relationships (including professional learning available on the [Inclusion, Wellbeing and Equalities Professional Learning Framework](#))

Anti-racist professional learning, such as **Building Racial Literacy**, and guidance on [promoting anti-racist education](#)

[LGBT inclusive education resources and professional learning](#)

I Am Me Scotland – Education platform offering resources and training on a range of issues including child exploitation online, vaping, county lines, bullying and [tackling prejudice against disability](#)

Action on Prejudice resources including activity packs, research, action plans, policy documents and more resources shared by partners from across Scotland. They all relate to taking action against discrimination, hate crime and prejudice.

Online bullying

Legislation relevant to aspects of online safety, including the safe and responsible use of mobile phones, can be found in [Appendix C5](#) of the Scottish version of the online safety policy tool for schools, **360 Degree Safe Scotland**. [The 360 Degree Safe Scotland self-review tool](#) is free to use and is intended to help schools review their online safety policy and practice.

If you're worried about online abuse or the way someone is communicating with a child online, you can report it through the **National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)** command. Children can also report inappropriate content themselves.

For more information on setting up devices and accounts see [Education Scotland's Cyber Resilience and Digital Safety page](#).

You can report distressing online content to the **Report Harmful Content** website, including threats, bullying, suicide or self-harm content, violent content and porn.

Children and young people can report nude images and videos of themselves online and get them removed through the Report Remove tool on the [Childline website](#).

Children and young people can also use **Take It Down**, which is a tool from the National Center for Missing and Exploited children. This can be used to remove images and videos, or to stop images from being shared online.

The **Revenge Porn Helpline** helps support people aged 18 and over who have had intimate images shared online without their consent.

You can also report distressing content seen on social media directly to the platform you saw it on. Go to the platform's help section to find out what to do.

You should report child sexual abuse content to the [Internet Watch Foundation](#).

If you feel someone is abusing, exploiting or likely to exploit a child or children, or you believe a child or young person is at risk of being a victim, call Police Scotland on 101. If

you think they may be in immediate danger, dial 999 and speak to the police immediately. The [Police Scotland website](#) has more information on what happens when you make a call, and how to get in touch by text or via contact Scotland-BSL.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

It is every child's right not to be bullied. Children's rights are unique in that many of them, although designed for the safety and protection of children, have to be provided for by adults and the government.

Although children and young people are covered under the Human Rights Act 1998, their rights are more clearly specified under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The Convention has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights.

Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status.

The Convention must be seen as a whole: all the rights are linked and no right is more important than another. The right to relax and play (Article 31) and the right to freedom of expression (Article 13) have equal importance as the right to be safe from violence (Article 19) and the right to education (Article 28).

UNICEF provide information regarding all of the rights as well as resources to help with campaigns around rights through the Rights Respecting Schools Award.

For more information, please visit www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/

Respectme have explored the UNCRC in relation to bullying behaviour and information from this can be found by visiting <https://www.respectme.org.uk/resources-rights/>

Equally Safe

Equally Safe at School (ESAS) is an online intervention which supports secondary schools across Scotland to take a whole school approach to addressing gender-based violence (GBV).

LGBT Youth Scotland

LGBT Youth Scotland has developed a number of resources for practitioners, parents, carers, and young people to support and guide inclusion and homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying behaviour.

The resources are organised into the following categories:

Schools and education

Young people

Community capacity building

Health

Domestic abuse

LGBT Youth Scotland are a key partner in presenting current research towards improving the lives of LGBT young people in Scotland.

For more information and to view the resources, please visit <https://lgbtyouth.org.uk/>

National Bodies

Training and peer support is offered through national organisations for teaching and Community Learning and Development staff. Through professional learning events and seminars, training courses and workshops, research and online forum discussions, a range of resources are available to support the challenging of behaviour and perceptions.

These resources include:

[Tackling Sectarianism Resources CPD training](#) (Sense over Sectarianism and YouthLink Scotland – The National Agency for Youth Work)

i-develop website service provided to support creative, innovative and effective learning and development for CLD practitioners (Community Learning and Development Standards Council)

Professional values into action tools (The General Teaching Council for Scotland)

Myths of Immigration (Guidance for early years, teachers and lecturers on challenging myths and mis-understandings – Educational Institute for Scotland)

Get it Right for Girls (Challenging misogynistic attitudes among children and young people – Educational Institute for Scotland)

Sexuality and Gender Identity – Tackling Bullying (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers)

For more information and to view the resources highlighted above, visit:

www.youthlinkscotland.org

www.i-develop-cld.org.uk

www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/professional-values-into-action.aspx

www.eis.org.uk/index.asp

www.nasuwtd.org.uk/advice/bullying.html

Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised programme of simple steps that can be used to help a person in distress.

The course does not train people to be mental health workers. It offers basic general information about mental health problems. The knowledge presented and understanding developed in the course helps to remove stigma and fear and to give confidence in approaching a person in distress. Mental Health First Aid is an initial response to distress and all participants on then course understand that this help is given only until other suitable or professional help can be found.

For more information or to view the course details visit www.smhfa.com

Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme

Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer mentoring leadership programme for young people. It gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence. It addresses a range of behaviours including sexting, controlling behaviour, sexual harassment and consent, and uses a 'bystander' approach where individuals are not looked on as potential victims or perpetrators but as empowered and active bystanders with the ability to support and challenge their peers in a safe way. A strong emphasis has been placed on building healthy, respectful relationships both in the school and in the community.

The MVP Programme is a peer mentoring programme. Once schools receive initial training their next task is to recruit and train a team of MVP mentors from the upper part of the

school. It is this 'boy to boy' and girl to girl' mentoring that has demonstrated positive outcomes for the MVP programme as well as giving MVP mentors valuable life skills.

For more information and to view the resources, please visit <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/mvpscotland/>

Stonewall Scotland

Stonewall Scotland support individuals to work out how to can make a difference for LGBT people at work, at home and in their communities. They seek to equip people with the tools and confidence to connect with, influence and enable others in their communities by challenging homophobic bullying, biphobic and transphobic bullying, celebrating difference, and improving inclusion and visibility of role models.

Stonewall Scotland also works within organisations, including workplaces, schools, healthcare providers, sports clubs and religious institutions, both here and abroad, to ensure they offer inclusive, equal and inspiring environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

Through its work, Stonewall Scotland has produced resources to support better understanding of the issues faced by LGBT people, and to help ensure that policies and strategies are LGBT inclusive.

In particular, Stonewall Scotland engaged children and young peoples to produce the School Report Scotland 2017. The report gathered the experiences of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people, to highlight the issues that they face, the support that they need, and recommended steps to help take the report forward.

For more information and to view the resources and reports, please visit: www.stonewallscotland.org.uk

Scottish Traveller Education Programme

The Scottish Traveller Education Programme website provides resources, tools and information, promoting innovative approaches to learning. Families, young people and teachers have been involved in co-producing all the materials.

The materials support all aspects of learning with an additional focus on tackling bullying and the issues facing Traveller young people.

The website provides links to resources and training for teachers and all professionals who are involved in education with people from travelling cultures, as well as advice and guidance for young people and their parents/carers.

For more information and to view the resources, please visit www.step.education.ed.ac.uk

Bullying UK

Bullying UK is part of Family Lives, a charity with over three decades of experience helping parents/carers to deal with the changes that are a constant part of family life. Their role is to support everyone to achieve the best relationship possible with the children that they care about.

They provide professional, non-judgemental support and advice through their helpline, website, befriending services and parenting/relationship support groups. Nearly all services are accessible at no charge to parents/carers and they can be contacted 365 days a year.

They offer support when life becomes complicated and provide support around family breakdown, aggression in the home, bullying, risky teenage behaviour and mental health concerns of both parents/carers and their children.

Family Lives offers a range of courses for professionals, including online courses, as well as training for parents/carers.

For more information and to view the resources and reports, visit <https://www.familylives.org.uk/>

YoungMinds

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people.

Driven by their experience, they create change so that children and young people can cope with life's adversities, find help when needed and success in life.

YoungMinds provides a guide for parents/carers worried about their child's behaviour or mental health that seeks to equip them with strategies to support themselves and their child.

They also provide both in-house training and open access training. Their open access training is open to individuals and groups, held at a YoungMinds location on specific dates throughout the year. Their bespoke in-house training is delivered to your organisation and can be tailored to meet the needs of the organisation. There may be costs associated to these training opportunities.

For more information or to view the resources, visit www.youngminds.org.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

CEOP is a law enforcement agency dedicated to keeping children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online. They help thousands of children and young people every year.

They are there to help and give advice, and anyone can make a report directly to them if something has happened online which has made them feel unsafe, scared or worried. This might be from someone they know in real life, or someone they have only ever met online.
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If you make a report to them it will be read by one of their Child Protection Advisors who will get in contact with person reporting on the phone number or email address that is given to them to make sure that they are safe. They will also discuss with them what will happen next.

The website offers further information about keeping children and young people safe across the following categories:

- 5-7 years old
- 8-10 years old
- 11-13 years old
- Young people aged 14+
- Parents/Carers
- Professionals

For further information or to view the course details, please visit www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

Thinkuknow

Thinkuknow is the education programme from the National Crime Agency's CEOP command.

Thinkuknow aims to empower children and young people aged 5-17 to identify the risks they may face online and know where they can go for support. It is based around three key themes:

How to have fun

How to stay in control (or how to take control)

How to report a problem

The education programme consists of:

A presentation, which is given to young people in schools, youth groups and other youth environments

A website aimed directly at young people, which also contains information for teachers and parents/carers

A number of hard-hitting education films designed to make young people think about whom they are talking to online, and

Other resources including posters and a range of promotional materials

For more information and to view the resources visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Childline

Childline started in 1986 providing a free helpline for children to which is now a free 24-hour counselling service for children and young people up to their 19th birthday. In 2006, Childline joined the NSPCC in order to expand to the provision it offers now.

Childline offers information, advice and resources on the range areas and topics listed below:

- Bullying, abuse, safety and the law
- You and your body
- Your feelings
- Friends, relationships and sex
- Home and families
- Schools, college and work

The website discusses different types of bullying and how to get support and feel better. In addition to this, Childline published reports that help develop understanding of the changing issues from research they have carried out with young people.

For more information and to view the resources and reports, please visit www.childline.org.uk

Public Health Scotland

The National Suicide Prevention Programme offers suicide prevention training covering areas from awareness and exploration to suicide first aid skills. Courses are organised and delivered at a local level by qualified trainers.

Training offered includes:

ASIST – a two-day workshop that offers practical help to enable caregivers to recognise and intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide

SafeTalk – a three hour training which gives you the skills to recognise when someone may have thoughts of suicide, and to connect that person to someone with suicide intervention skills

SuicideTALK – a short exploration and awareness-raising session, of one to three hours. It is flexible to meet the needs of each group. SuicideTALK is aimed at all members and groups within communities.

For more information and to view the resources, please visit <https://publichealthscotland.scot/population-health/public-mental-health/mental-health-and-suicide-prevention-learning-resources/suicide-prevention-learning-resources/>

Hands on Scotland

Hands on Scotland have developed their website to help make a difference to children and young people's lives. It gives practical information, tools and activities to respond helpful to troubling behaviour and to help children and young people to flourish.

In 2 parts:

- How to Help Children Flourish; and
- How to Help with Troubling Behaviours

How to Help Children Flourish is a resource that gives information, ideas and activities to help promote positive mental health (flourishing) in all children and young people. It also aims to help prevent the difficulties described in the Troubling Behaviours section and to help improve your own mental health and create a flourishing community.

This section was designed for parents, carers and anyone working with infants, children and young people (for example; teachers, social workers, foster carers, health workers, school nurses, nursery nurses etc.).

How to Help with Troubling Behaviours is a resource that provides practical information and techniques on how to respond helpfully to children and young people's troubling behaviour and promote their mental health and wellbeing.

This section was designed for anyone working with children and young people (for example: teachers, social workers, foster carers, health workers, school nurses etc.)

For more information and to view the resources and reports, visit www.handsonscotland.co.uk

No Knives Better Lives

No Knives Better Lives is a national initiative which works with local organisations to provide information and support. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the consequences of carrying a knife and provides information on local activities and opportunities for young people.

They provide learning resources across primary and secondary age groups for young people, parents/carers, and practitioners to explore the consequences of knife crime in particular. They provide access to online practitioner training packages, peer education training, education toolkits for schools and youth work settings, and a range of supporting resources from high-quality videos and animations to posters, leaflets, reports and evaluations.

For more information and to view the resources, please visit <https://www.noknivesbetterlives.com/>

Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN)

SOSCN is the national infrastructure umbrella organisation providing support, mentoring, training, information and resources to all childcare services in Scotland, which provide childcare, play and learning opportunities for school-age children.

SOSCN provide guidance on developing anti-bullying policy for Out of School Care, equalities and diversity, promoting positive behaviour and training for practitioners in areas such as Activity and Wellbeing.

For more information and to view the resources, please visit www.soscn.org

Early Years Scotland

Early Years Scotland offers a range of professional learning opportunities to inspire, encourage and support practice for Early Years providers.

Their professional learning opportunities can be delivered at a time and place to suit needs. They also offer weekend and evening opportunities and are currently developing a new online learning platform.

Early Years Scotland's opportunities cover all aspects of early year's provision with particular focus on involving parents/carers in their children's learning and developmental support.

A Professional Learning Framework of all training offered is revised regularly.

For more information and to view the resources, please visit <https://earlyyearsscotland.org>

Other relevant links

<http://www.enable.org.uk>

www.enquire.org.uk

www.circle-time.co.uk

www.changingfaces.org.uk

www.incentiveplus.co.uk

www.brief.org.uk

10. The legal framework and policy landscape

There are a number of legal obligations on education authorities and schools that must be considered as part of their approach to preventing and responding to bullying.

Legal framework:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (the "UNCRC Act")

Following the introduction of the UNCRC Act, it is now unlawful for a public authority in Scotland, which is likely to include education authorities and some schools, to act (or fail to act) in connection with a relevant function, in a way which is incompatible with the UNCRC requirements. Although there is not an express right not to be bullied within the UNCRC, a number of rights are upheld through the furtherance of anti-bullying work. This includes the right of every child to live free from violence, abuse, and neglect, which includes protection from violence committed by other children, and places emphasis on their rights to education, health, and participation in decisions affecting their lives. Grounding anti-bullying efforts in this framework of rights ensures a holistic approach that respects and protects the dignity and wellbeing of every child, and reinforces the importance of creating safe, inclusive, and supportive environments where children can thrive.

The UNCRC requirements as incorporated by the UNCRC Act, should be considered by all public authorities in Scotland who are carrying out a relevant function, as set out in the Act. However, public authorities are encouraged to take a children's rights approach regardless of the legal source of their duties. The UK has been a signatory to the UNCRC since 1991 and regardless of the scope of the legal duties in the UNCRC Act, the UNCRC is at the heart of GIRFEC and the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring that all children and young people have the best possible start in life.

Schools and education authorities should avoid basing policies on a single UNCRC article without considering broader implications. The UNCRC supports taking effective action against bullying to protect children's health and safety, and education authorities should take all appropriate measures to protect children from violence, including peer violence.

Online bullying

There are various legal provisions designed to protect individuals from online harassment, abuse, and harm. Some online behaviour may be illegal under the following legislation:

1. **The Equality Act 2010:** this Act prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on protected characteristics, such as race, disability, and sexual orientation, which can encompass certain forms of online bullying.

2. **The Communications Act 2003:** Section 127 of this Act makes it an offence to send grossly offensive, obscene, or menacing messages through public electronic communications networks.

3. **The Malicious Communications Act 1988:** this Act covers the sending of letters or other articles with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, including online communications.

4. **The Protection from Harassment Act 1997:** this Act provides protection against a course of conduct amounting to harassment, which can include repeated online bullying incidents.

5. **The Defamation and Malicious Publication (Scotland) Act 2021:** this Act modernises the law on defamation, allowing individuals to seek redress for harm caused by false and damaging online statements.

6. **The Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016:**²¹ criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

7. **The Online Safety Act 2023:** creates a number of new offences, including encouraging or assisting serious self-harm, cyberflashing, sending false information intended to cause non-trivial harm, threatening communications, intimate image abuse.

These legal provisions can empower parents, young people, schools, authorities, and Police Scotland to take action against online bullying. Understanding that these laws exist can help adults working with, or caring for, children and young people to recognise when behaviour crosses legal boundaries and to take appropriate steps to protect them.

Legislation relevant to aspects of online safety, including the safe and responsible use of mobile phones can be found in [Appendix C5](#) of the Scottish version of the online safety policy tool for schools, 360 Degree Safe Scotland. [The 360 Degree Safe Scotland self-review tool is free to use and is intended to help schools review their online safety policy and practice.](#)