

# Stewarton Academy Anti-Bullying Policy

## References:

- [East Ayrshire Relationships Framework](#)
- [Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children & Young People](#)





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## Anti-bullying behaviour policy

### **RATIONALE**

**Bullying behaviour impacts on young people's wellbeing and can affect their participation, attainment and inclusion. Stewarton Academy has a positive ethos and there is no place for bullying in our school community.**

Stewarton Academy's Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed in line with the East Ayrshire Council policy. [East Ayrshire - Respect for All Policy](#)

This policy includes an explicit commitment to addressing bullying and addressing it quickly. Bullying should never be seen as a typical part of growing up.

Central to this are our **School Values** of:

**Respect Responsibility Fairness Determination**

Our **Vision** is that:

Every pupil will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults

Pupils and their parents/carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent and/or respond to bullying appropriately

Every pupil 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



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## Anti-bullying behaviour policy

### What do we mean by bullying?

In Scotland, bullying is defined as follows:

*"Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships, it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online" (Respect Me, 2015)*

This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.

This can include (but is not limited to):

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/online
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Having belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face-to-face and/or online)
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone

We address online bullying as part of our whole anti-bullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy (See Appendix 1)

- 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).

Prejudice-based bullying that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to behaviour and language that could manifest into racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia or prejudice and discrimination towards disability or faith (see Appendix 2)

## Main forms of Bullying:

<b>Physical</b>	Pushing, hitting, kicking, punching, taking belongings
<b>Verbal</b>	Name calling, insults or making offensive remarks; threats and intimidation or an act of violence with intent to harm
<b>Indirect</b>	Spreading nasty stories about someone; exclusion from social groups or being made the subject of malicious rumours
<b>Cyber</b>	Tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted using text messaging, e-mail, instant messaging or any other type of digital technology e.g. social networking sites. Misuse of associated digital technology such as camera and video aids – refer to Safeguarding policy

## When is it not bullying behaviour?

At Stewarton Academy we discuss with young people how they feel to help them to develop resilience to manage their relationships. We know that young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of growing up and most young people have the ability to bounce back from this type of behaviour.

At Stewarton Academy we focus on early intervention, prevention and focus on ensuring we get it right for all of our young people.

*'Labelling children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims' can be disempowering and unhelpful in changing their behaviour or supporting their recovery from being bullied. Labelling an action as bullying is a more effective way of motivating a child to change their bullying behaviour. This approach should be reflected in policy and underpin practice.' (Respect for All Guidance, Scottish Government)*

## **Bullying is a breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**



Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It should encourage children to respect others' human rights as well as their own and other cultures. It should also help them to live peacefully and respect other people. [UNCRC](#)

**Under the Equality Act 2010, there are nine protected characteristics that provide protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation



Any bullying related to these characteristics is unacceptable and we give a clear commitment to challenging all types of prejudice-based bullying and language. In addition to the Protected Characteristics covered by the Act, there is an expectation that other groups will be considered for example:

- care experienced young people
- young carers
- young people living in deprivation
- young people with body image issues

[Equality & Human Rights Commission - Guidance for Schools](#)

### **Responding to attempted bullying behaviour**

Sometimes, attempts to bully can have no obvious or immediate effect. A person can attempt to bully someone using a range of behaviours but it may have no impact – in this case the person has not been bullied but the behaviour needs challenged and recorded appropriately and is not ignored. For example, the use of homophobic or other derogatory language, which may have no impact on the person it is aimed at, must still be challenged as the language itself is unacceptable and could impact on other people.

### **Bullying or Criminal Behaviour?**

Some online behaviour may be illegal and young people are made aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online via Personal and Social Education (PSE) and Campus Police Officer inputs. Sexual imagery, the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016, criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and this is all covered as part of our Health and Wellbeing programme



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### Responding to Bullying

Each bullying incident is reviewed individually and a number of different practices may be adopted before finding one that is effective.

Any bullying behaviour must be challenged, however, all people (including those causing bullying) should always be treated with respect. This does not diminish the seriousness nor impact of bullying behaviour; rather, it is an essential way of maintaining the adult's focus and response on the behaviour that is problematic. This is a solution-oriented approach that is designed to help people change the way they behave without being stigmatised.

Therefore when responding to incidents or accusations of bullying the approach is to ask:

- 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, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

Children and young people who are exhibiting bullying behaviour will need help and support to:

- Identify the feelings that cause them to act this way
- Develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings
- Understand the impact of their behaviour on other people
- Repair relationships

At Stewarton Academy we work in partnership with parents/carers and will contact home if an incident of bullying has been reported to us. Parents/Carers are often invited into school to explore different approaches to dealing with the situation and are advised that we may try different practices before finding one that is effective.

At Stewarton Academy we work in partnership with our Campus Police Officer in all incidents of bullying. In some situations there may be a need for a multi-agency *Team around the Child* meeting to ensure that the right people at the right time are involved in supporting.

Parents and pupils are always given advice about who to contact outside of school hours for support.

• Parent Line

**ParentLine**  
SCOTLAND 08000 28 22 33

• Police Scotland 101

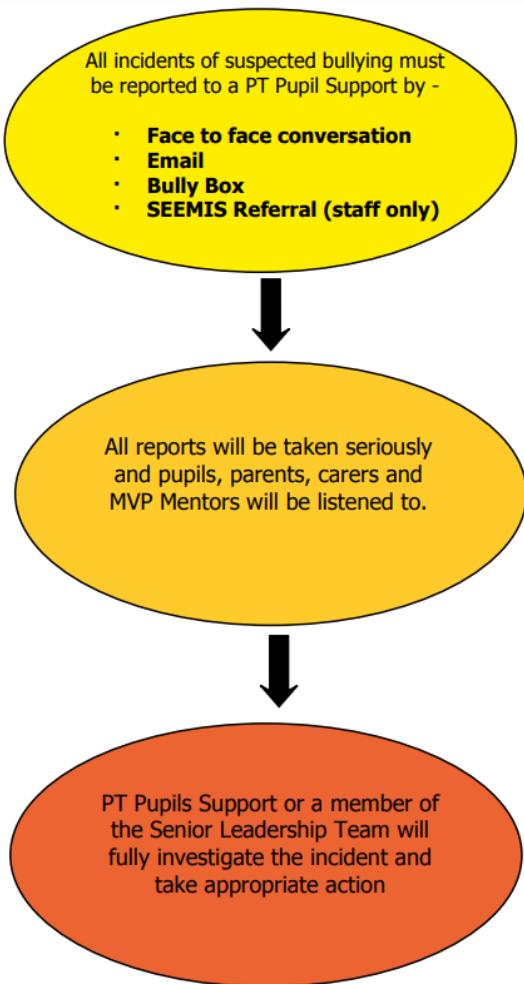




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### Reporting Bullying



Stewarton Academy has Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP). MVP is a peer mentoring programme that gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence. It addresses a range of behaviours including name-calling, sexting, controlling behaviour and harassment, and uses a 'by-stander' 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.



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## Anti-bullying behaviour policy

### Recording Incidents

Incidents are recorded in SEEMIS 'Bullying and Equalities' module by the Pupil Support staff/Senior Leadership Team. The incidents are regularly monitored to identify trends so that forward planning for PSE, parental involvement sessions and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partnership working can be targeted around areas of need.

Recording will include information on:

- 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 and
- Actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level

Formal monitoring and evaluating of bullying incidents will take place annually and will be the responsibility of the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

The following will be used to assess the impact and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy:

- number of bullying incidents recorded
- number of concerns reported by pupils
- sample pupil surveys
- follow-up discussions with pupils involved in bullying

**Review** - The anti-bullying policy will be reviewed every two years in consultation with staff and pupils.

**This policy is in line with our Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.**



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## Anti-bullying behaviour policy

### Pupil Views

Following consultation with pupils some areas of concern were identified. Pupils reported that they were aware of sexist, homophobic, and transphobic language being used by pupils within the school. This was further highlighted by a focus group with the LGBTQ+ group.

In order to combat this we will increase input regarding sexist and discriminatory language with the curriculum within PSE and link with the MVP Programme to further embed this. We will also raise awareness of homophobic and transphobic language with inputs from the Campus Police Officer highlighting the legal position on this and how hate crimes are tackled.

Young people identified that having worry boxes and QR codes to report concerns around the school building to be something of value. Additionally the idea of peer supporters was well received where young people report to an older pupil and that information is passed to the Pastoral team.

### Parents/Carers Views

Parental views were collected through online surveys and questioning during parent's events. As with the pupil views worry boxes, QR codes, and peer supporters were popular ways of helping to report bullying. As such we have now created multiple worry boxes for anonymous reporting, and also QR codes will be displayed and shared on year group TEAMS pages. Parents/Carers also mentioned using a specific email to report bullying concerns but on investigation this proved to be logically unmanageable.

Several comments on setting up an Anti-Bullying Committee with pupils, parents, and staff were taken on board and we will look to establish this within the school year 2023/2024. Display board around the school will be set up and maintained to keep the profile of this high.

### Staff Views

Staff views were in line with young people views that sexist and homophobic language were identified as being heard by staff in corridors and at break and lunch. This will be addressed as mentioned above via the PSE programme and inputs from the Campus Police Officer. Some staff identified that they would like online CPD opportunities and all staff were directed to the RespectMe website with online learning modules - <https://respectme.org.uk/training/anti-bullying-learning-academy/> Additional in person training was sought by staff, and as such on in-service days with the 2023/2024 school year these will be delivered to all staff.

Staff wanted a clear and concise steps to follow when reporting bullying so that they were confident in addressing it. This can be found in Appendix 3 of this document and a flow diagram was created to be displayed in each department of the steps that will be followed after a report of bullying.



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### Anti-bullying behaviour policy

### Anti-bullying Web Based Resources

[Respect Me - Respect Means](#)

[Responding to bullying - What are my options?](#)

[Bullying - A guide for parents and carers](#)

[Anti-Bullying Policy through to Practice - Getting it Right](#)



## Anti-bullying behaviour policy

### Appendix 1 Glow Guidance

#### Be Secure

- Always keep your Glow password to yourself
- Always sign out of Glow when no longer using it

#### Be Polite

- Always treat others with respect
- Never post or share a message, document, image, video or any other content that is inappropriate or likely to cause harm or offence to others

#### Be Safe

- Always remember to be careful when communicating over the internet – other users may not be who they seem
- Don't share your personal details with other people
- Never agree to meet someone in person who you have only met on the internet unless accompanied by a parent, carer or other known and trusted adult
- Speak to an adult immediately if you see a message, image or anything else on the internet that concerns you

#### Be Legal

- Never post or share a message, document, image, video or any other content that you do not have permission to use

#### Be Responsible

- Always be mindful that once you put something online, that information may be beyond your control
- Never post or share a message, document, image, video or any other content online that you would not wish other learners, teachers, or parents to see
- Remember that anything you do can be traced back to you
- If you misuse Glow, this can be reported to your school. If you spot something that doesn't follow these rules please report it

**NOTICE: All access, use and content on this network is monitored by Glow to manage performance, security, and compliance with Glow Community Rules.**

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## Anti-bullying behaviour policy

## **Appendix 2**

This section outlines the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 as well as other characteristics which may lead to bullying that are not covered by the Equality Act 2010.

### **Additional Support Needs:**

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

### **Age:**

Age is a protected characteristic although prejudice and discrimination based on age is not applicable in school settings, it can affect children and young people in a variety of other settings. For example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

### **Asylum Seekers and Refugees:**

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

### **Body Image and Physical Appearance:**

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

### **Disability:**

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

### **Gender Identity and Transphobic Bullying:**

The term 'transgender' is an umbrella term for those whose gender identity or expression differs in some way from the sex that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, neither or aspects of both. Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic. Transgender people face significant societal prejudice largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways including transphobic name calling or deliberately misgendering them. An individual 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 term 'gender reassignment' is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010 and refers to those who propose to go through, are going through, or have gone through a process of gender re-assignment.

### **Gypsy/Travellers:**

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

### **Sexual Orientation, Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying:**

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010. Bullying based on sexual orientation is largely motivated by prejudice towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people. Homophobic bullying is when a young person's actual or perceived sexual orientation is used to exclude, threaten, hurt, or humiliate them. Any young person can be homophobically bullied, whether they are LGBT or not. Sometimes young people can be homophobically bullied because others think that they are LGBT, because they have LGBT family or friends or often because they are seen as different or not conforming to traditional gender stereotypes. Transgender children and young people can therefore also experience homophobic bullying. Homophobic language and jokes around the school can create a climate of homophobia; for example, the use of the word 'gay' to mean sub-standard or uncool. This type of language should therefore be addressed.

### **Intersectionality:**

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

### **Looked After Children and Young People:**

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

### **Marriage/Civil Partnership:**

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

### **Racism and Race:**

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

### **Religion or Belief:**

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

### **Sectarianism:**

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

### **Sexism and Gender:**

Sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment are all protected characteristics. Bullying in the form of derogatory language and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour – suggesting that they are not being a real man or a real woman. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity. Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are perceived not to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying. Personality traits that do not fit into the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can lead to bullying because of the prejudice towards their perceived difference.

### **Socio-economic Prejudice:**

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

### **Young Carers:**

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

## Appendix 3 – Procedures Following a Report of Bullying

### Report

**Inform appropriate member of staff. This may be a PT Guidance or a member of the senior Leadership team.**

### Stage 1 – Remedial Action

**If remedial action can be taken to resolve the issue, complete the following actions.**

Interview young person who has experienced the bullying.	
Interview any other pupils involved.	
Decide if remedial action can be taken to resolve the situation. If yes implement action.	
Update parents of those involved and share Anti-bullying Policy.	
Add key events to pastoral notes.	
Open a record on Seemis Bullying & Equalities module (see below).	
Identify any immediate supports* required by the young person.	
Agree timeframe to review and ensure issue has been resolved satisfactorily.	

### Stage 2 - Investigation

**If a resolution is not possible then initiate an investigation.**

Interview those involved in the incident.	
Interview any witnesses.	
Review CCTV.	
Share findings with pupil who has experienced the bullying and discuss next steps.	
Discuss any disciplinary actions with HT and action them.	
Update parents of those involved and share Anti-bullying Policy.	
Update guidance, agree timeframe for review and ask them to action any supports* for those involved	
Add key events to pastoral notes.	
Updates Seemis Bullying & Equalities module (see below)	

**Record**

**All incidents must be recorded on Bullying & Equalities Module within SEEMiS as a record of the incident/issue regardless of the outcome.**

- Who reported incident?
- Who was involved?
- Place/date/time
- Nature of incident (Protected characteristics?)
- Impact
- Staff name/s who witnessed/dealt with incident/issue
- Statement of agreed actions
- Planned outcomes- monitoring/timelines
- Incident conclusion

The young person's pastoral notes/chronology/staged intervention paperwork/well-being application should also be updated as appropriate.

**Review**

**Following both a Stage 1 and Stage 2 bullying incident/issue, a timeframe to review and check in with the young people involved should be agreed. Guidance or Year Head should agree who will complete following actions.**

Regularly check in informally with those involved to ensure there are no further issues.	
At the end of the agreed timeframe, meet with young people involved more formally to ensure incident has been resolved to their satisfaction.	
Call parents to ensure incident has been resolved to their satisfaction	
Updates Seemis Bullying & Equalities module.	
If all is resolved to satisfaction of young person and parent, incident is closed, if not, return to Stage 2 of process or refer to complaints procedure.	

**Further Action**

If the situation cannot be resolved the schools Quality Improvement Officer/Inclusion Co-coordinator should be consulted on how to proceed or if their parent exercises their right to make an official complaint. Depending on the seriousness of the incident the police may be involved if a crime has been committed. Actions by children and young people who are involved in bullying behaviours may be subject to the school's disciplinary procedures. The most serious incidents may lead to exclusion from school. Further information can be found in the Management Guidelines: Inclusion Guidance including Exclusion procedures version 2.

**\*Possible Supports**

- Safe space at social times
- Time in Pupil Support
- Senior school buddy
- Wellbeing mentor
- Referral to school counsellor
- Referral to nurture group
- Involvement in group work or involvement in Breakfast Club or other activities